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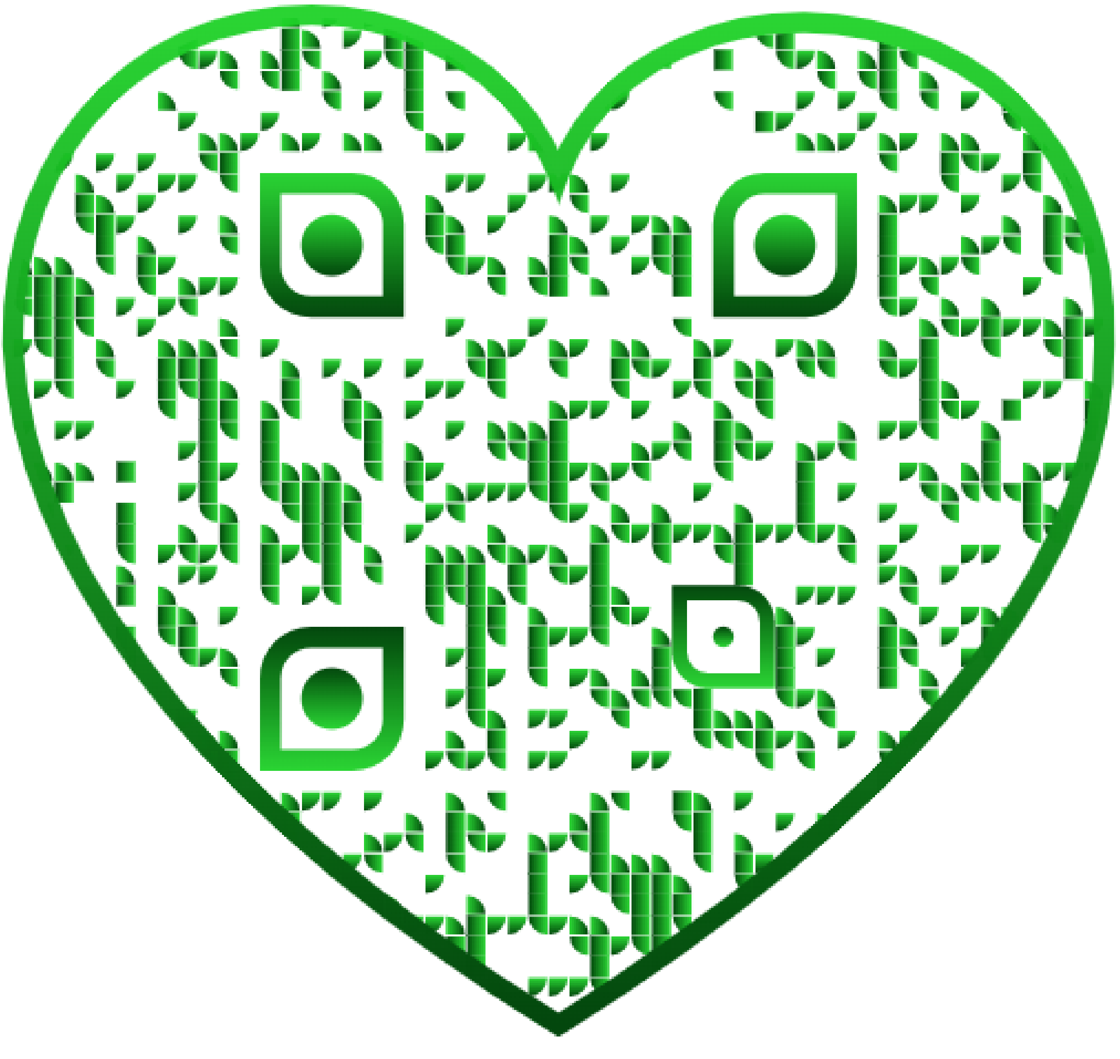
JUNE 2025

# ASIMAKIS CHANIOTIS



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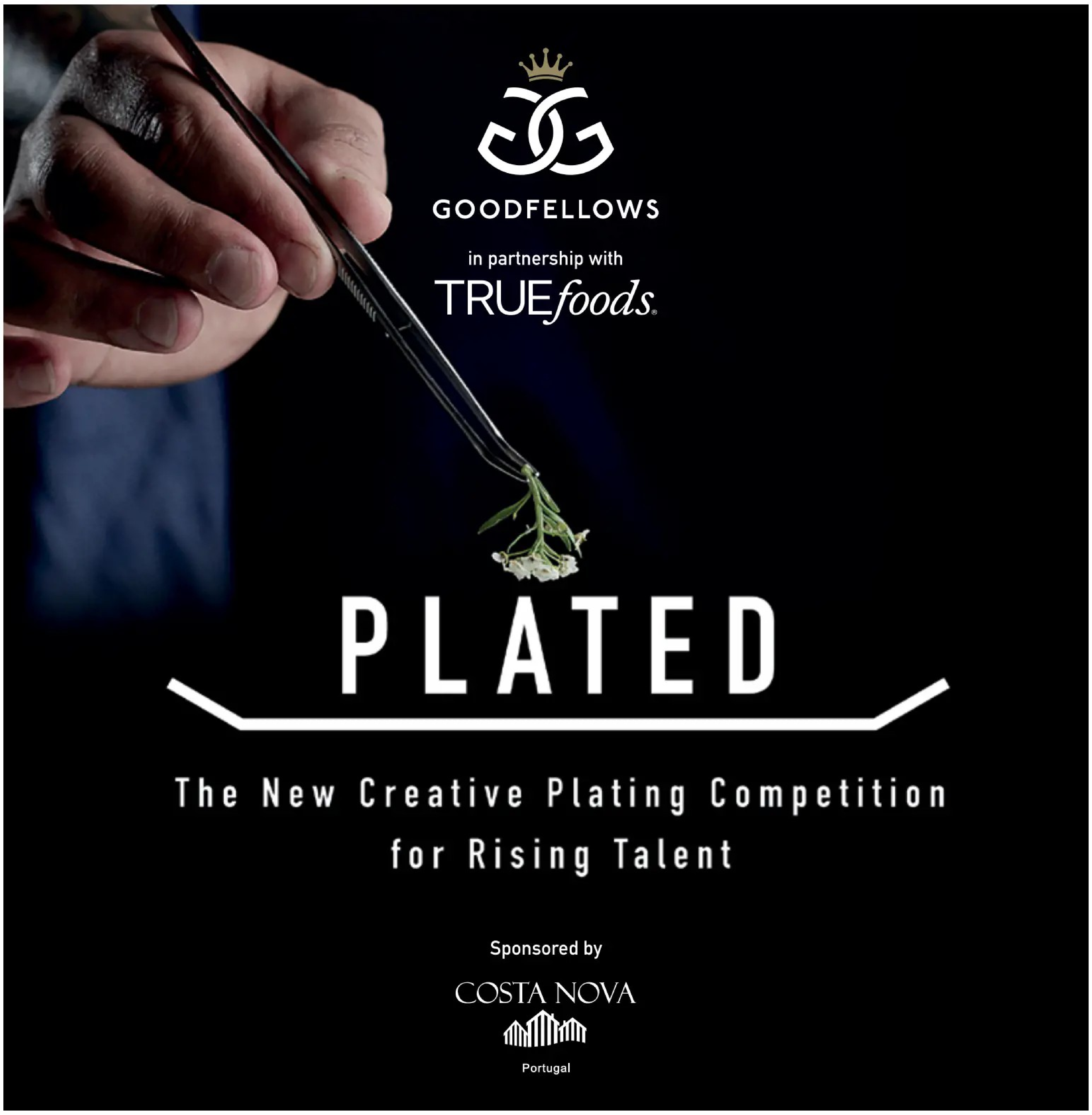
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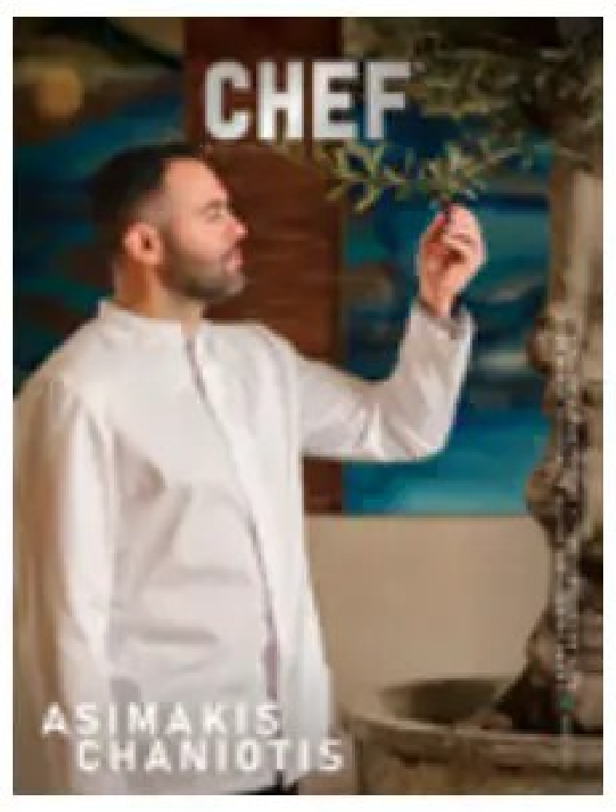
**COVER IMAGE**
Claude Okamoto



# WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT...

We have been privileged to have been included in some extremely special events over the past weeks that have truly highlighted what the people within the hospitality sector stand for. Friendship, support, commitment and dedication.

Joining chefs Heston Blumenthal and Alain Roux at the most extraordinary collaboration held at The Waterside Inn was an experience that I will never forget, for so many reasons. On paper, the celebrations were to honour 40 years of 3 Michelin stars at The Waterside Inn and 30 years - 21 of those with 3 Michelin stars - of their neighbour – The Fat Duck. But I believe for chefs around the world, the evening and all the social media posts from it were even more meaningful.

It is no secret that Heston has struggled over recent years, and to those who have followed his career, his absence was felt - he had been missed. Seeing him back on top form and witnessing the bond between him and Alain Roux really brought it home how their shared love of gastronomy – however different their two cuisines may be – sparked a true friendship that has only deepened over the decades. Hospitality has a way of bringing people together, not just the diners who frequent our venues, but for those who work inside the sector.

We attended the relaunch of the Vincent Room restaurant at Westminster Kingsway College. The newly refurbished restaurant now allows students to train in a real working environment, while also offering diners an exceptional experience. Opening the Vincent Rooms was Michel Roux Jr, who spent time with the student chefs in the kitchens before taking to the stage to welcome everybody, 'you should see the smiles on the faces of these young chefs' he told the invitees, 'They're happy, they're proud to be chefs. They are excited for their futures. And that is what it is all about'

A second Westminster Kingsway event was held at the end of May. This one their annual business partner and sponsors' lunch. Every year we produce a showcase film to play to guests, we visit alumni in their workplace, chat to current students, industry leaders and sponsors. We get under the skin of what this school of hospitality and culinary arts delivers and reinforce the need for the sector to work together to support future talent.

It was wonderful to celebrate longevity in the sector as Chutney Mary reached its amazing 35-year anniversary. Joining the family were other industry leaders, themselves having operated businesses through recessions, a pandemic and ever-changing policy. Raymond Blanc entertained us all with recollections of his early years arriving in the UK while Marc Flanagan, executive chef of Buckingham Palace told stories of the late Queen Elizabeth II fondness for our sector and how King Charles III and the wider royal family carry the same regard for hospitality in 2025.

Til next time
Claire

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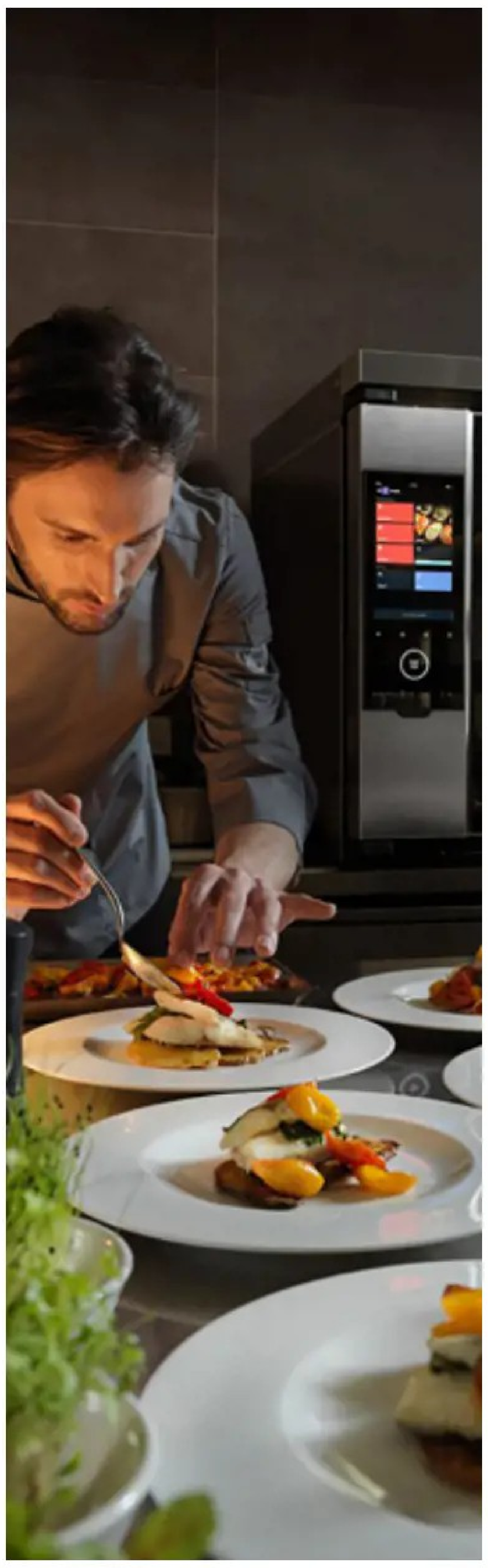

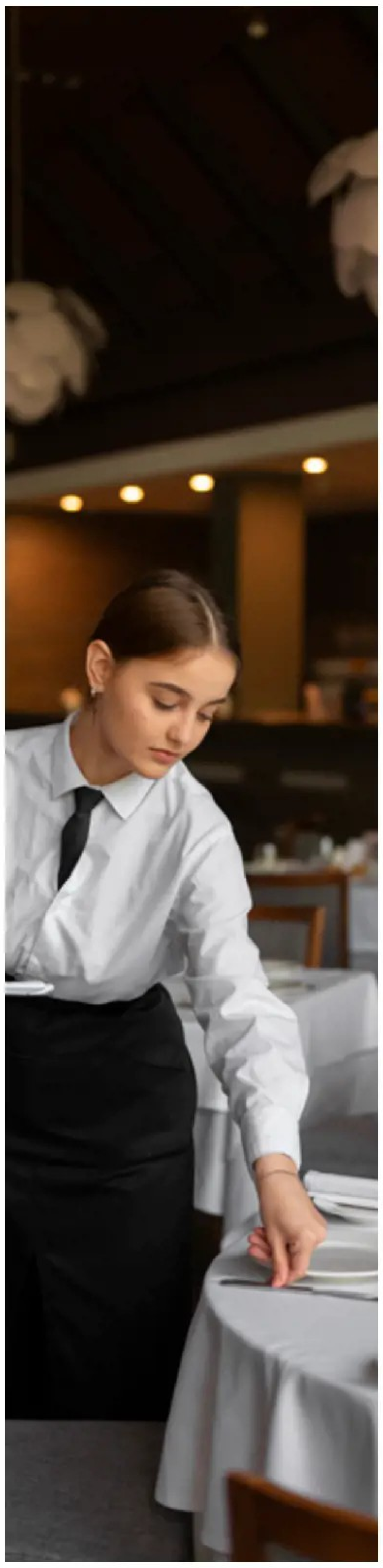

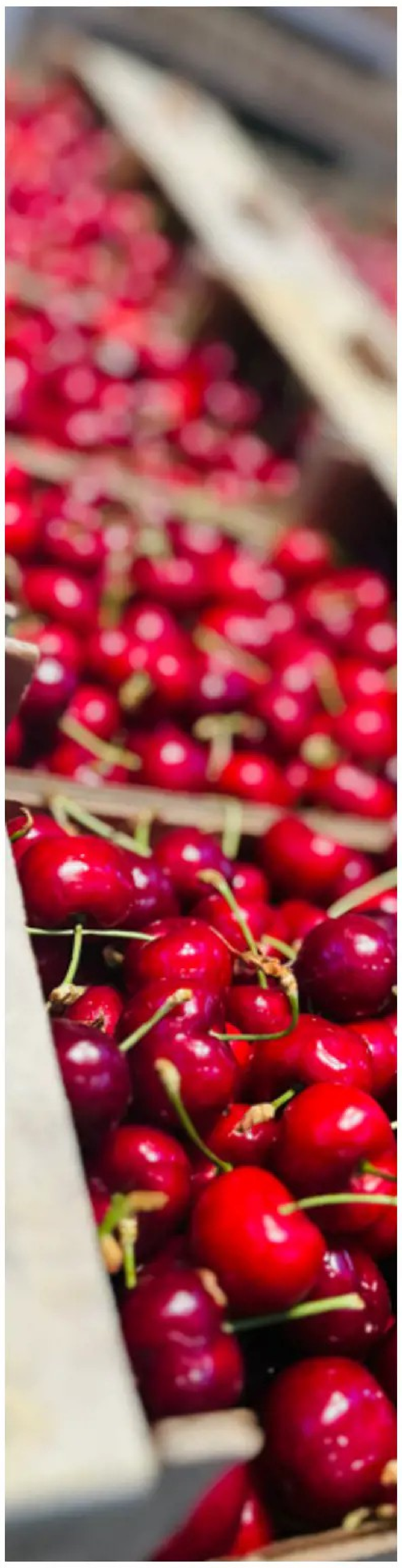

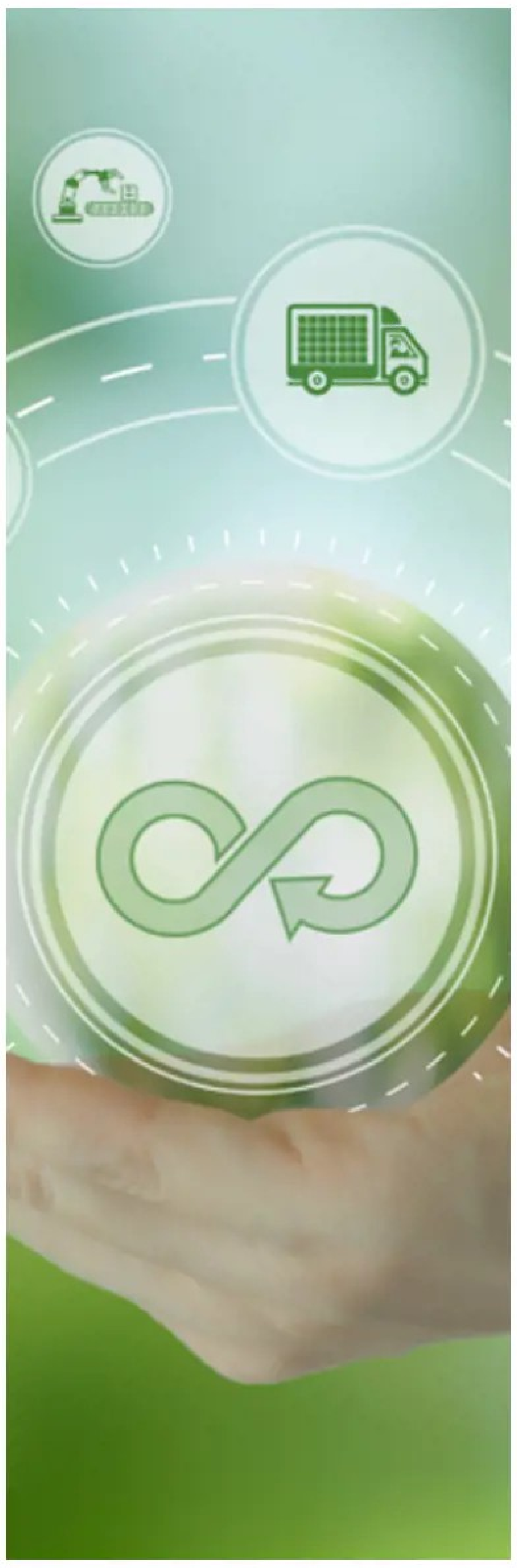

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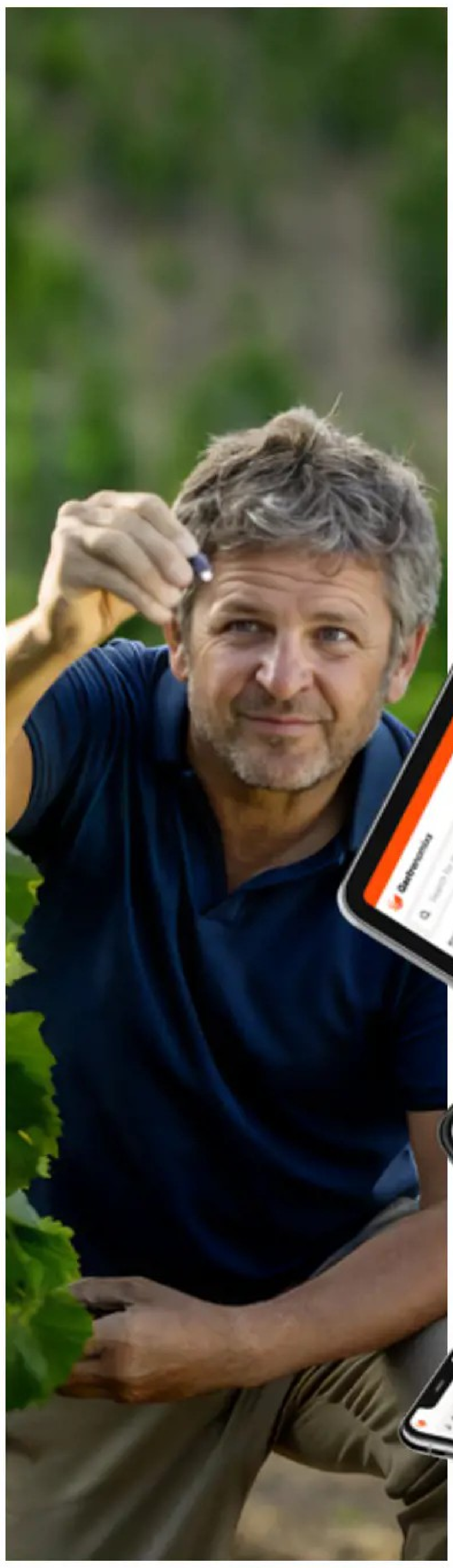

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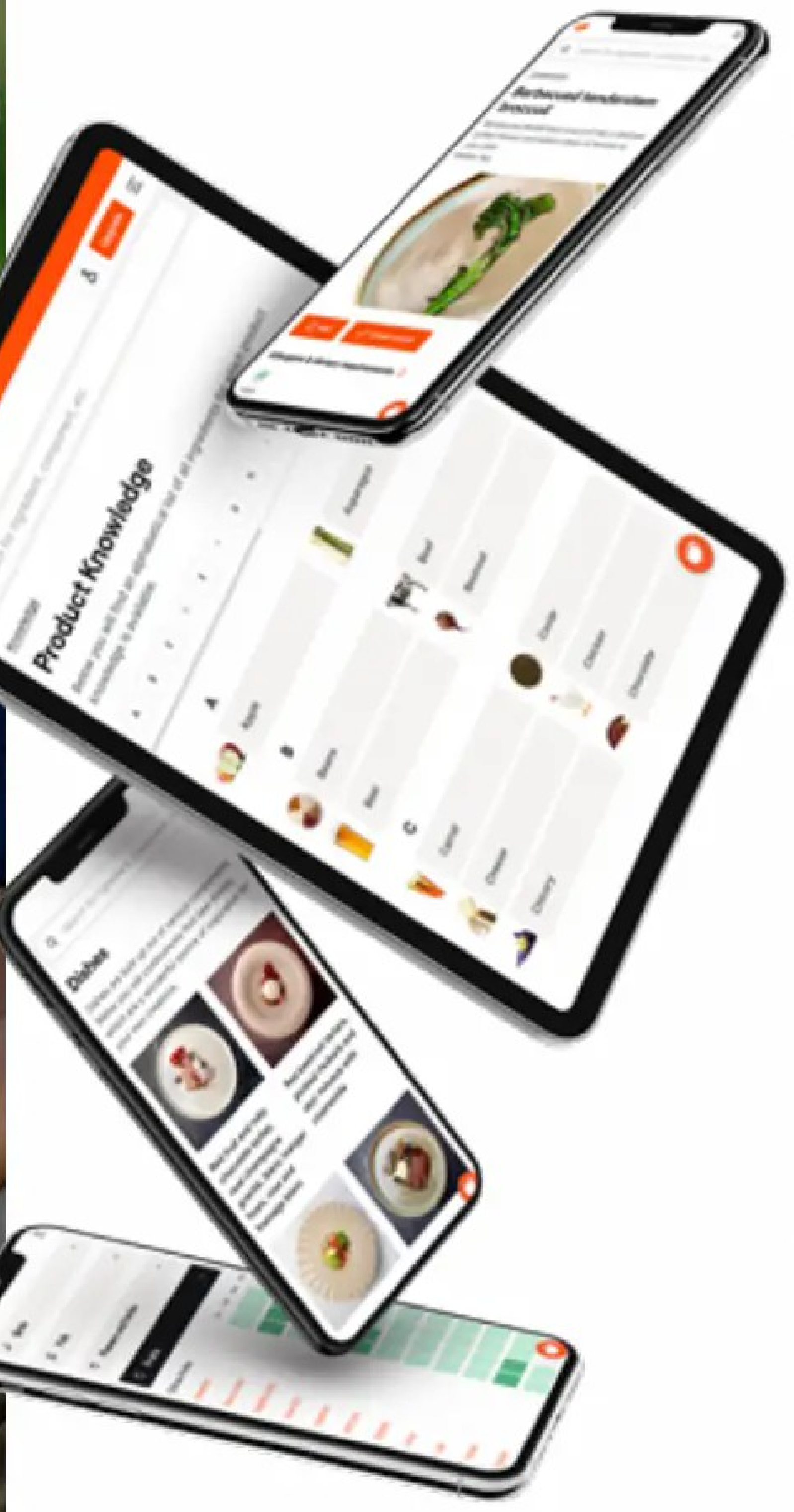
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Words Claire Bosi
Camera Claude Okamoto

# Asimakis Chaniotis

Myrτoς
BY
Asimakis

“IT WAS ONLY WHEN I HAD LEFT PIED À TERRE AND FOUND THIS SITE, THAT I BEGAN TO BELIEVE THAT ONE DAY, I WOULD HAVE MY OWN NAME ABOVE THE DOOR TO MY OWN RESTAURANT.”

He never allowed himself to daydream what his own restaurant could look like. Over the years working in Greece and London, Asimakis gave 100% to every kitchen he worked in. His energy is infectious, "I love work; I love being busy and I go to sleep excited to face the next day. I have always been like that. So, when I was working, I didn't waste time imagining my own place, I was always committed to the job in hand. It was only when I had left Pied à Terre and found this site, that I began to believe that one day, I would have my own name above the door to my own restaurant."

Myrtos. Only a few weeks open and already a firm fixture with the South Kensington dining set. As we sit chatting in the early morning, locals are popping their heads in through the door – keen to secure a table. The restaurant, named after Asimakis favourite beach back home in Kefalonia, is his love story to his homeland. Asi has played a hand with every single detail. From the olive oil on the tables to the artwork on the walls, he has curated the lot. Not least the extraordinary talent he has with him in the kitchen.

"I have a very strong core team of chefs who have worked with me at Pied à Terre in the past. Because we are such a strong team, after just five days of operation, I was able to be in the dining room, serving dishes to all my customers."

Those who know Asimakis will know him as a bundle of excitable energy. And from listening to his recollections of days as a young man, back in Athens, it would appear that this is his permanent natural state.

"I would say that I was hyperactive as a boy – and I still am today. I get up every day at 6am and get some work in before I come to the restaurant. Then, when I finish work at 11pm, I go home, and I am still buzzing. I am insanely workaholic. I can't see myself not working at all.

"From the age of 12, I was going to work with my dad in my free time. He is a plumber and had his own business which was incredibly busy. I followed him on summer holidays, Easter holidays, Christmas – every chance I had, I would be going to work with him. He gave me a work ethic that I still have to this day. You have to work to make your living.

My parents never handed me money to go out with. I was making my own money. I was

saving to buy my own computer. I was buying drinks for my friends. There was never any culture of pocket money. I had to earn it."

When he arrived at the point of working out what career path he might head down, Asimakis' father encouraged him to join the family business, "He was making great money, had built all his children a house in Athens and he wanted me to work with him, and one day take over. It seemed like the right move.

"But working during holidays and working full-time together are two very different things. My Dad is a bit neurotic like me. We would go to work together, and he would be cursing insanely. One day, I was two hours away from Athens. We had a job working on 100 luxury flats. It was 45 degrees Celsius. The middle of August. And Dad started cursing. Something snapped in me - I just decided fuck that. Took the bus back to Athens and told Dad I wouldn't be working with him. But then I needed to work out what the hell I would do."

Like almost every Greek family, Asimakis had grown up in a culture that celebrates food, "every day, our Mum would cook from scratch for us. Lentil soups, stewed chicken with okra, green beans cooked in tomato sauce - traditional Greek dishes. And every Sunday, my dad would invite the wider family and friends to our house in Athens. We would have this enormous grill and cook maybe 20 kilos of lamb chops. There would be many side dishes that either we made, or family brought with them. The afternoons would stretch far into the evenings. Now I live in the UK, I see how this is a very different culture. But for us growing up, it was completely normal."

"My grandmother had a house in Kefalonia, and every single year we would go there for a month in the summer. My late grandfather loved to grow produce. We had four different varieties of grapes. Walnut trees. Almond trees. Fig trees. He was growing tomatoes, cucumbers, watermelons, peppers, chilies, onions, garlic, melons, and he would take me down to harvest the produce that was ready. I loved it.

I learned to have this intimate connection with produce, without even realising it. I was a kid just running around playing and running around bronze fennel. I picked fruits and vegetables and ate them straight form the garden, and I remember very vividly - when I was about seven years old - we came back from the beach and needed to make a quick salad. There was no cucumber in the garden – it was finished. My grandfather told me to go down to the gardens and pick the hardest melon I could find. When I return with the melon, my grandfather peels it, cuts it and puts in salad. The melon was so unripe it tasted like a cucumber. Things like this, knowledge passed on to me from my family, and from being raised around the best, freshest produce - they're imprinted in my memory and became the foundation of everything I cook."

Knowing that he did not want to head back into a formal university education, Asimakis looked towards his connection with food as an alternative profession, "I was good at maths and I loved both physics and chemistry, but I didn't want the authority of teachers. I was a bit of a rebel.  I couldn't see myself going to university. I loved cooking at home, so told my parents I was going to become a chef."

Asimakis joined a culinary school in Athens, "we did theoretical training in the winter and in summer we were sent to hotels to work and get experience. As soon as I joined, I realised that it was a calling.  I finished one of the best five students in my year. I just really loved being in a kitchen."

After completing his culinary education, Asimakis then had to attend 9 months of National Service, which he completed in the marines, "I loved it. And I don't like authority. The basic concept of everyone following something, pushing hard to break boundaries is literally what I am like.  I was almost tempted to stay in the military, but I had already booked a summer season working at a hotel for when my service ended."

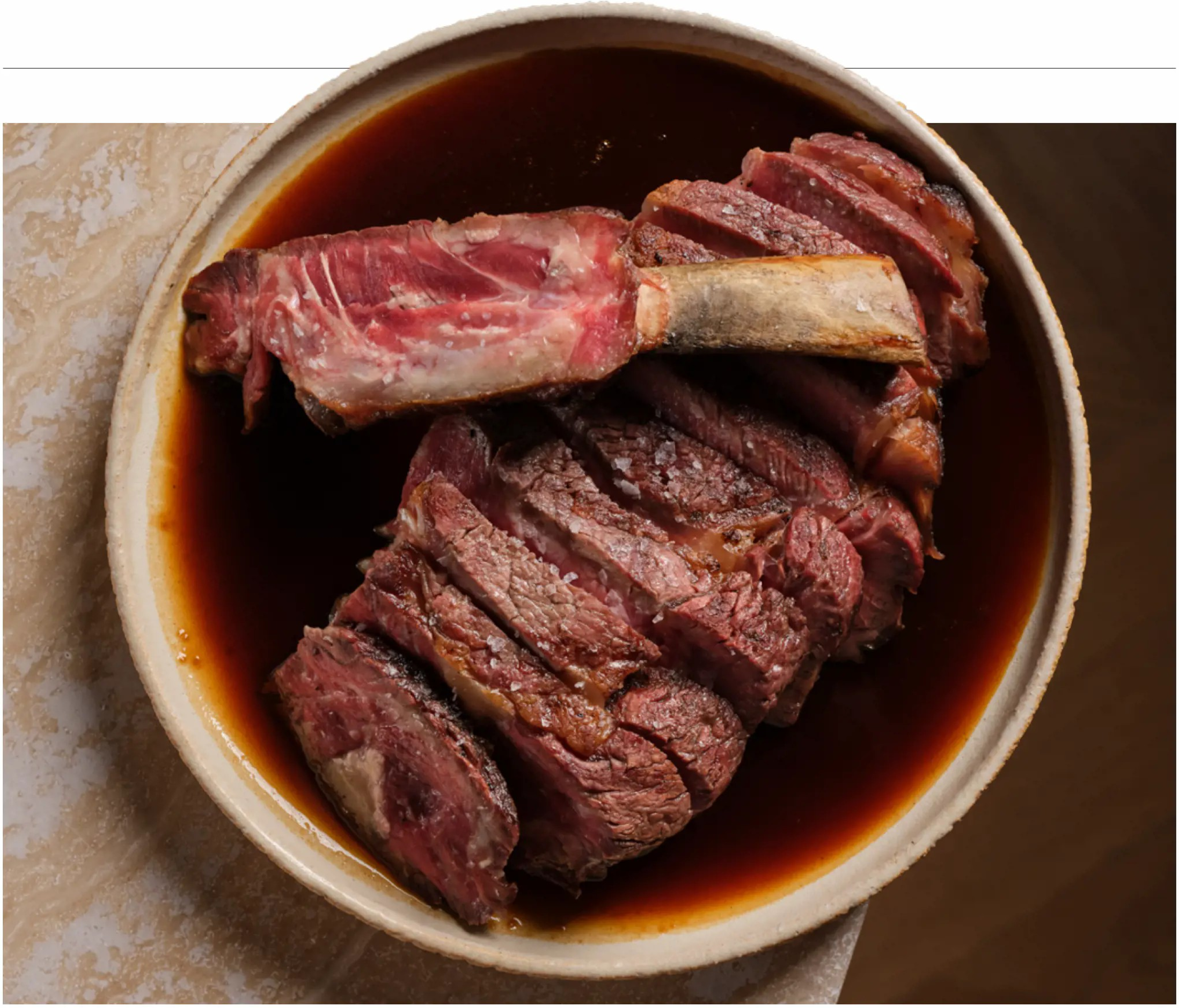
He joined one of the most prestigious Greek hotel chains in Athens, "after three years working there, the chef called me to one side to say he was thinking of promoting me to sous chef. I was just 21 years old.

"In Greece, people tend to stay in jobs for a long time. That meant there were chefs in the kitchens who were 40-50 years old. I knew that, at 21, I did not have the authority, nor knowledge, to govern a team so much older than me. I didn't want to do that.

"Although I was very mature for a young person, I was also a massive rascal and big rebel. But I had enough maturity to say that I would decline the offer of the sous position - because I knew I was not ready for it."

Asimakis decided it was time to leave and experience working somewhere else, "I really want to go to France. I always loved French food - how strong it is with butter and cream. Back in Athens we had been taught classic French techniques, so working in France appealed to me – but I didn't speak the language. English though, I had been studying all my life, I had my certificate, and I had a good friend living in London. So, on 11th October 2011, I flew to the UK with my then girlfriend, and the rest is history."

Arriving with no place to stay, other than crashing at his mate's house, and with no job on offer, Asimakis threw himself into the first work opportunity he could, "I arrived at my friend's house at 10pm and night, and the



next morning I was working. There was no time to settle in – I didn't even see Big Ben for six months! It took me a good six months to transfer the English I had learnt in school into a working version of the language and to communicate better, before I really began to look for the job I wanted."

Confident in his ability to integrate into a London kitchen, Asimakis then wrote to all the Michelin starred chefs in London, asking for a work trial, "the first to reply to me was Pied à Terre, I was invited in for a couple of days. After the trial I was offered a job, so even though I had received several offers from other kitchens I thought why go for more trials when I had enjoyed Pied à Terre so much?."

In 2012, Asimakis joined the Michelin-starred restaurant Pied à Terre, working alongside chef Marcus Eaves, "Marcus was intense to work alongside at times. The place was so busy - 40 for lunch, 60 for dinner - that it demanded a lot from him, and he then expected a lot from us. But it was an incredible school in the sense of how tight the kitchen was, and the high quality of the produce and the dishes coming from that kitchen. I will always be very grateful for the opportunity that I was given to join the team. There were ups and downs, but at no time was quitting an option. There were days when I almost broke but didn't. I can perform insanely under pressure. Other people did break. Especially new chefs coming into the kitchen. It was tough."

Asimakis worked under two head chefs during his first years on Charlotte Street, Marcus Eaves left in 2015 to head to Oblix, and Andy McFadden then moved from L'Autre Pied, Pied à Terre's sister restaurant, in 2015, to replace Marcus.

"Andy and I didn't really find a great working relationship. It was a difficult time for him.

ASIMAKIS CHANIOTIS, **MYRTOS**

After 6 months working together, I applied for a trial at Per Se in New York. I wanted to leave London at that point. I was 25 years old - had been at Pied à Terre for 5-6 years and I couldn't see how I could progress there. I didn't want to go and hand out my CV to find a job. I wanted to go to one of the best restaurants in the world. One random night after work, I applied online for a job at Per Se, not really expecting to hear back. The next day there was an email inviting me over.

Thomas Keller is an idol to me, and my time at Per Se was brilliant. I wanted to be in a city and New York was amazing. The early morning shift starts at 4am, when the butchers and fishmongers go in, prep all the meat and fish for the chefs. The morning chef shift begins at 6am and finishes early afternoon. The lunch chef shift arrives at 12pm so the morning and lunch teams are together for a few hours doing prep. Early evening a dinner shift starts and finishes around 2am. The kitchens were a team of 100 chefs, it was extraordinary. Between 2am and 4am a team came in to do a deep clean, so the kitchens were beyond spotless. Per Se was this machine of activity, with a kitchen that was only clear of chefs for 2 hours a day."

With a permanent job offer from Per Se, Asimakis returned to London to complete his paperwork and visa – he was due to relocate within 8 months, "I told David Moore that I would be moving to New York, but still had a few months left in London. With Andy and I not rubbing along so well together and with L'Autre Pied struggling a bit, David asked me to go and help them out a bit, rather than head back to Pied à Terre. I did that. The place was in a bit of a mess; there seemed to be little control in the kitchen and David wanted me to help put the place back on track. When I arrived, they were employing a company to clean down the kitchens at night, rather than chefs and KP's taking responsibility for it. I put a stop to that immediately; it was the responsibility of the brigade to clean down their kitchen. The next day, the head chef quits. David then comes to me and suggests that I take over L'Autre Pied? That was 2016.

"I had the opportunity to relocate to New York to work at Per Se, as a junior chef or my first chance as head chef. David and I chatted over

a few bottles of wine, and he convinced me to stay. I sent my thanks and apologies to Per Se and remained in London."

For most of 2017, Asimakis ran L'Autre Pied. Then Andy McFadden left Pied à Terre and that presented another opportunity. Pied à Terre's owner, David Moore, had no hesitation in appointing Asimakis as the restaurant's executive chef. In 2018, at just 28 years old, Asimakis earned his first Michelin star—becoming one of the youngest chefs in London to receive the honour and the first Greek chef to be awarded a Michelin star outside of Greece.

"The move to executive chef at Pied à Terre meant I had so much to learn. There's so much business to learn. How to manage food costs, calculate gross profit margins, navigate staff budgets. I learnt all this on the job. There's a reason executive chefs tend to be in their 40's or 50's - you need experience behind you to do the job properly."

With a progressive leadership style, Asimakis introduced a no-swearing policy in the kitchen to foster a respectful and focused working environment. He also launched the "Chef's Table by Asimakis" experience, offering an intimate, multi-course dining event where dishes are prepared and served in front of guests.

Asimakis recognises his "sliding doors' moment, where he could have permanently left London and started a brand-new life in the USA, had it not been for David Moore's belief in him, London may have lost Asimakis altogether.

"Working with David Moore was great. I was lucky enough to be able to communicate with him in an equal sense. I'm not a yes-boss person. I was never that person. If I didn't like something, I would say so. We had clashes, but we also had very good nights. We socialised together; we had fun, and David always made an effort to understand me. You must understand one another to run a successful business and respect each other's opinions. There would be times when David wanted something that I didn't agree with, but I would let it slide. Because he is the restaurateur, he has been in the business for almost 40 years. He knows what he is doing. Then there would be times when I would put my foot down as executive chef, and he respected that. So, we worked well together."

But, you know, after 12 years of work, when you're not the owner, something needed to change. I wanted more progress in my life. I wanted to see what else I could achieve. I was very fair to David, in my opinion. I didn't go out there looking for jobs. I left my job without having any idea how I would continue paying my rent next month. I did that, because David knows many people in the industry. I didn't want him to feel betrayed. I told him Pied à Terre was not working for me anymore. I was tired. I wanted something new. I wanted to be in my own place.

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I gave David six months' notice and once I had left, I started looking for investors."

## ON MYRTOS

"Myrtos is very, very personal to me and I love the South Kensington neighbourhood."

Knowing he wanted to open with his own name above the door, Asimakis first job was to connect with the right investor. He did have a contact, Nabil Mankarious - a former owner of The Real Greek – they had done bits and pieces of work together previously.

"After I had left Pied à Terre we went for a coffee. It turned out that we both wanted a new project in fine dining, we were both looking for the same thing. We agreed to move forward with a partnership. I knew the area I wanted to be in; I love this part of London – my first house was on King's Road. And this site that had been Aubaine was empty. It was perfect."

Having found the perfect home for his first restaurant, Asimakis involved himself with the tiniest of details. He wanted to honour his roots, to bring Kefalonia to South Kensington in an authentic, yet progressive way. And while certain specialist ingredients are imported from Greece, Asimakis looks to the UK first.

"Almost all my fish and meat are from the UK, because I wanted a support sustainability of produce all over England. The same with things like tomatoes or asparagus – I would say that around 90% of my produce is from the British Isles. But there are products which define authentic Greek cooking which I must import.

"Our cheese trolley is a Greek cheese trolley. Out of five suppliers that supply the cheese, three of them I have a personal relationship with. One of those I was making cheese with when I was a 15-year-old in Kefalonia. I have travelled to visit the other producers and seen how they make their cheese and

look after their livestock – all that knowledge is really important to me.

The only fish I import is a sea bass from Kefalonia. It is the number one place in Europe that produces the best quality farmed sea bass. It is not really imported to the UK because it is very expensive, the quality of the fish is insane. The fish are supremely well looked after and 90% of the produce is exported overseas. When the fish are harvested, they are placed immediately into ice water and straightaway leave for export. Kefalonia is only a 3-hour flight, so the sea bass I have on the menu left yesterday and is in my kitchen today. Having this sea bass on my menu is such a personal connection to my heritage.

My Olive Oils all come from Greece, from Mani. The table oil is a single estate oil made solely from organic Koroneiki olives. I use an early harvest for the tables and oil that is matured for a year downstairs for cooking, because it doesn't burn that easily. My salt is a natural lake salt, which is collected by hand. Then there are pickles and oreganos that I just cannot find the same quality here in the UK, which I import."

Ingredients are not the only thing to have Asimakis personal touch. The artwork in the restaurant is the craftsmanship of some of his closest friends, Yorgos Papadopoulos and Christos Raptis "the glass artwork is from Cyprus. I know the artist, Yorgos, personally. I brought sand from Myrtos, and he incorporated it into the pieces. The artwork I have on the walls is from Christos who is a painter in Greece. He has one of the most famous fish taverns in Kefalonia and is a friend. He came to London and painted the pieces in the restaurant.."

Everywhere you look in the restaurant, there is a tribute to Asimakis' home – in the middle of the room - a cascading and proud real olive tree centre piece. We chat about the experience he wants his guests to have, "so many people head to Greece to enjoy a holiday, and they escape real life for a while. Greece is sunshine, good food, bright colours and great wines – I want our guests to come here for a few hours and feel like they are on holiday. To feel that sunshine – even on a rainy day."

The cocktail list is also nothing short of spectacular and again, Asimakis has looked towards his homeland. Renowned for

their creative and sustainable approach to mixology - and ranked No.6 in the World's 50 Best Bars - Line from Athens has curated an exceptional cocktail menu for the restaurant. The selection showcases bold Mediterranean flavours and thoughtful craftsmanship. Highlights include the Mediterranean Martini, a briny, herbaceous blend of Kalamata olives, lemon, and thyme; the Spiced Pomegranate Mule, offering a refreshing, floral twist on a classic; and a uniquely savoury Bloody Mary, crafted with sun-dried Greek tomatoes, red beetroot molasses, samphire, and vodka. Each cocktail is designed to complement the restaurant's modern Greek cuisine.

"I flew to Greece and said to the guys at Line that I wanted to work with them and what would it take? They do consultancy all over the world, and didn't have anything in London so said they would love to have a chat. They made our list based on what we were putting on the menus and we travelled over to give them feedback. There was absolutely nothing we could say – the cocktails were amazing, out of the world. Our Bloody Mary is the best Bloody Mary you will have in your entire life.

Line has an amazing way of working. They have an insane amount of people on R&D. So, they speak with me about things I have on the menu. They take all the waste that can be repurposed and use it in the cocktails. They've been over here for two weeks training, and they will visit regularly to change the list as the seasons move. The whole project is very sustainable, and it is the way forward for businesses to make profits. We have to use every single thing. Peelings and shavings, I mean, they're viable products. They should be used.

Take yoghurt. Line takes the whey by-product. They reduce it, they dehydrate, and they put it in cocktails. They use everything and anything. And I'm so glad I'm working with them because it's going great so far."

Heading up the front of house team is General Manager Vasilis Kritselas, a seasoned hospitality expert with over 30 years of experience across both Greece and the UK. His extensive background and leadership bring a wealth of knowledge, warmth, and professionalism to the Myrtos dining experience.

Then the Myrtos logo, developed for Asimakis by Lisa Tse, it represents the sea and the flowers of the rock samphire, "which I use a lot in my food. I harvest it myself when I go to Greece. Lisa Tse is amazing, she has done work for so many great chefs. I told her what was important for me, she went away and came back with five logo's that were all incredible, and the one I chose just spoke to me straightaway."

The sun is shining, and we are now standing outside Myrtos, looking in as the restaurant is set for another busy lunch service. The al-fresco tables are outside; the awning is down. At least half a dozen locals have stopped by to read the menu and chat to Asimakis. It feels as though Myrtos is already a local institution, even though it has only been open a matter of a few weeks.

"This is exactly the vibe I wanted' Asimakis ends with, "You know yesterday we had three single diner tables come in. We had businesspeople, families, groups of friends, politicians – everybody was comfortable, had a great time and many rebooked to come back again. What more could I possibly ask for?.

## ASIMAKIS THE WINE MAKER

"I started making my own wine, three years ago. It's coming over here as we speak. My wine list is about 90% Greek with wines from small producers only. It is very important for us that producers pay attention to what they are making and put effort into not producing massive volumes for the sake of selling massive volumes.

That is what I'm doing as well. I'm only producing about 2,000 bottles a year. When it is harvesting time, I bring all my friends and family together and we stomp the grapes together – everything is done very traditional – we don't use machines at all.  Once barrelled, I double check everything – three or four times, the juice goes to a chemist to check everything is fine, that's a legal procedure in Greece. I bottle myself, label myself, box the wines myself. A complete labour of love.

I produce white, orange and red wines. And that's the only thing I want to make at the moment. These three wines are going amazing. The orange wine, I can't even have it here, is sold out. The minute I released it for sale it went. It is a very intense orange wine. The way I made it was very interesting. Normally, orange wine is white wine made with the red wine process. Basically, you leave the skin on. Normally, people leave it for the whole fermentation, which is about 30 days. I left everything there for a year. The result was a wine that was quite strong and had these brandy notes. It has a deep orange colour and I guess leans more towards being a bit like a sherry.

Eventually when I'm 60, I see myself living and making wine. Move to Kefalonia and retire there. Find a young talent to run the restaurant in London but spend my retirement making wine and cooking meat over a grill in the sunshine. I hope that no chef seems himself at 65 years old being in a basement, cooking in the kitchen. I love my craft more than anything, but at the end of the day, one day it's time for you to take a step back. But that day is a long way away. For now, I want to be at Myrtos 24/7 and 7/7!"

## ON HIS WORK ETHIC

"I definitely have my dad's work ethic. And in this profession, you really need a strong work ethic. It has made my success. That's what I think.

There are days - and I told my team this just three weeks ago – when I wake up in the morning and my back hurts like a fucking bastard, and I do not want to go to work. But I have to stand up and go to work. It's not an option of calling sick. I haven't called sick in my entire career, ever. My previous employers can testify to that.

For me it's a matter of quitting. I have never quit anything in my life. If I feel that I cannot make this work, I will make it work. Whatever it is. I will change myself to make this work if I must. If something is not right, I will speak to people and find out what I need to do to make it right. I am always happy to learn from someone else. But quitting is never an option."

## ON LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER

"I'm never going to hide from the truth. This profession has mistreated people in the past. That is a fact.

Obviously, I want every single customer to have a memorable experience. But if someone fucks up something, and you start abusing them, telling them they're shit, what does that achieve? It doesn't help them or the team. It doesn't help my mental health either. How would I feel when I go home and I'm relaxing, having a beer, knowing that I treated another human being like shit? I would feel like a lesser man.

We're not saving lives, we're cooking. And we're human beings at the end of the day. Human beings make errors.

"We have our good days; we have our bad days. When I started training with the guys here at Myrtos, I asked them to identify a colleague if they have a bad day - go there to assist them. Because if someone is having a bad day and still puts the effort in to come to the restaurant and work, that means something.

I said to my team, if you don't put the effort in to help a colleague – they won't put the effort in to help you if you are not very well. If they need you to cover for them or jump on their section to help them out – we should all do that. Without making them feel small.

I don't want to grow a combative and uncaring culture here at Myrtos. I want to grow a culture in which everyone helps everyone. If we can support someone and let them go home if they need to, then we should do that. Yes, of course, it is difficult sometimes to be able to let someone go when you know that you might be short in the team. But if you can do that, people feel more confident, they feel safe, they feel seen." C

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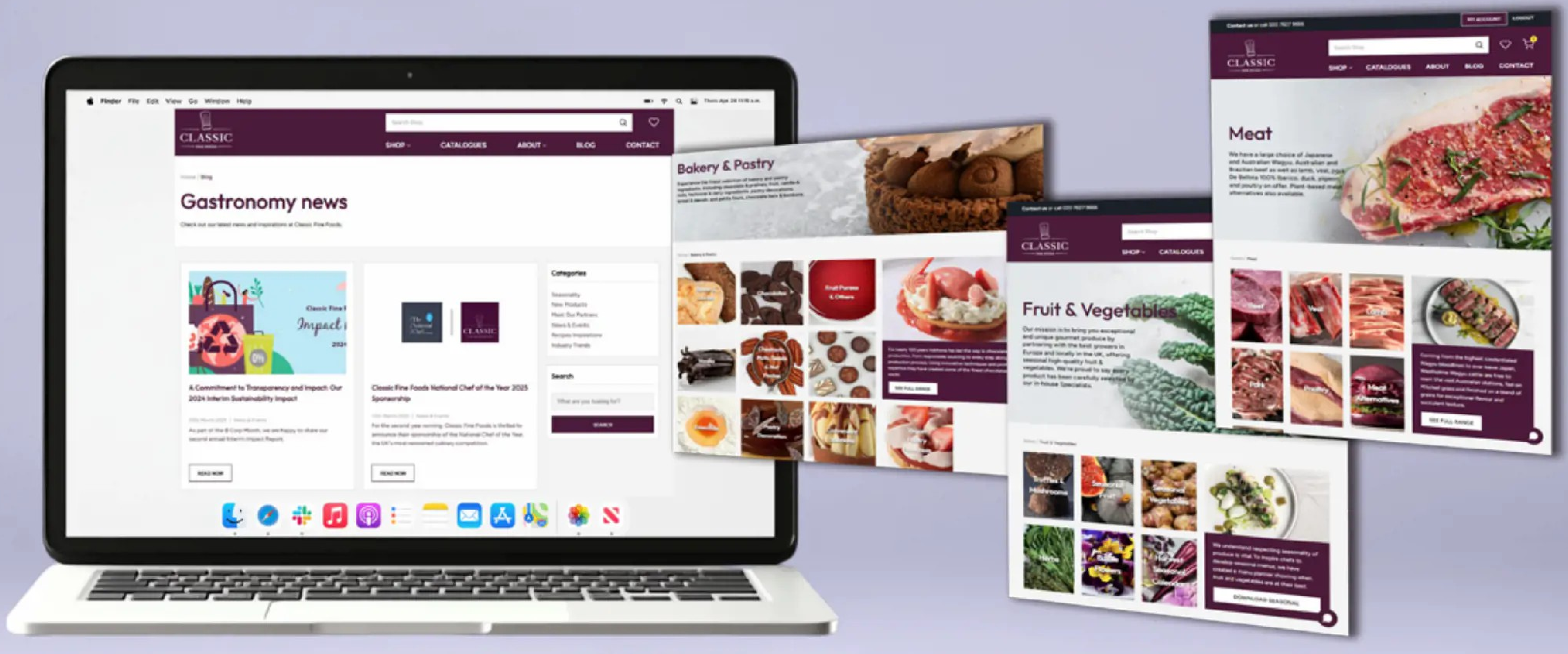

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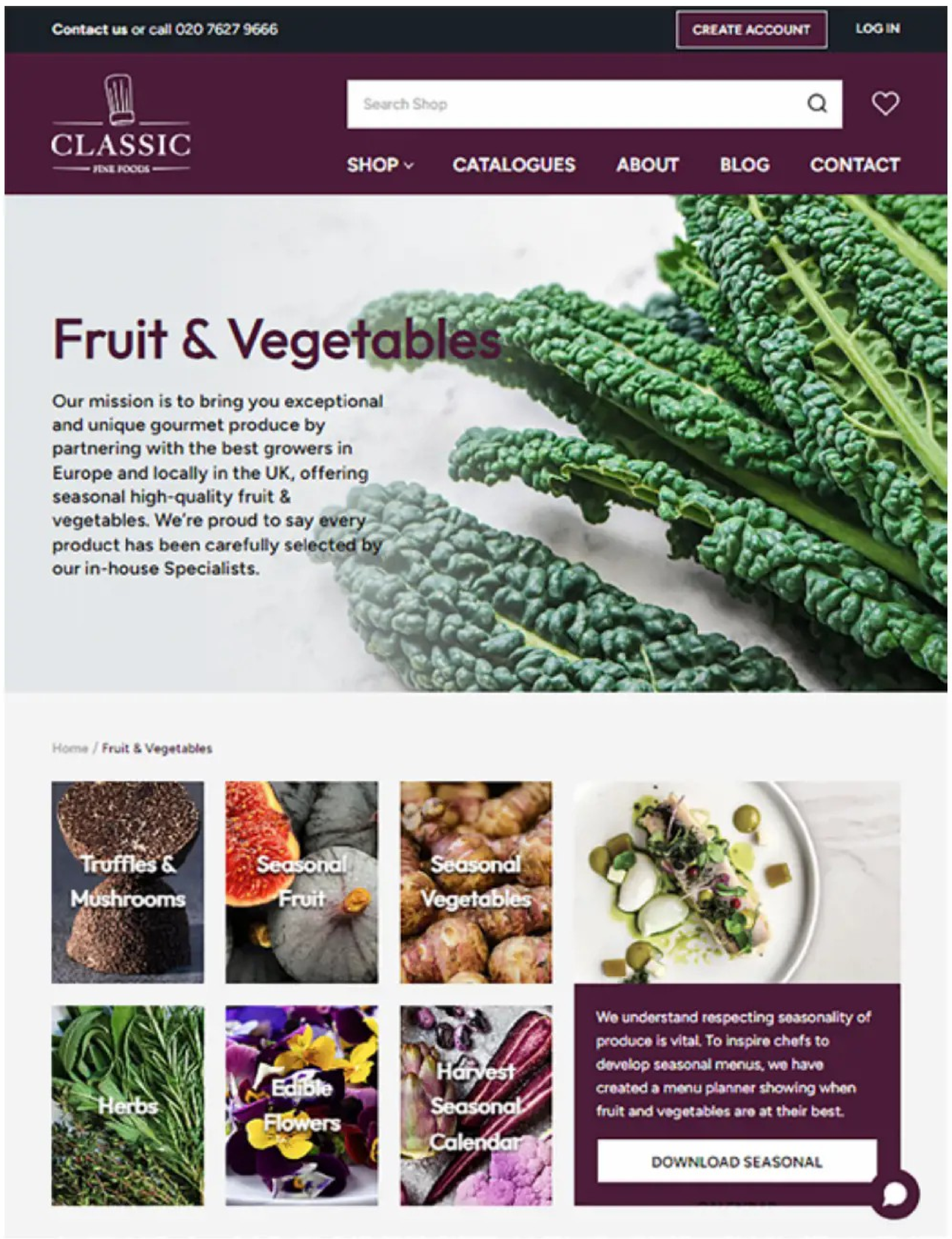
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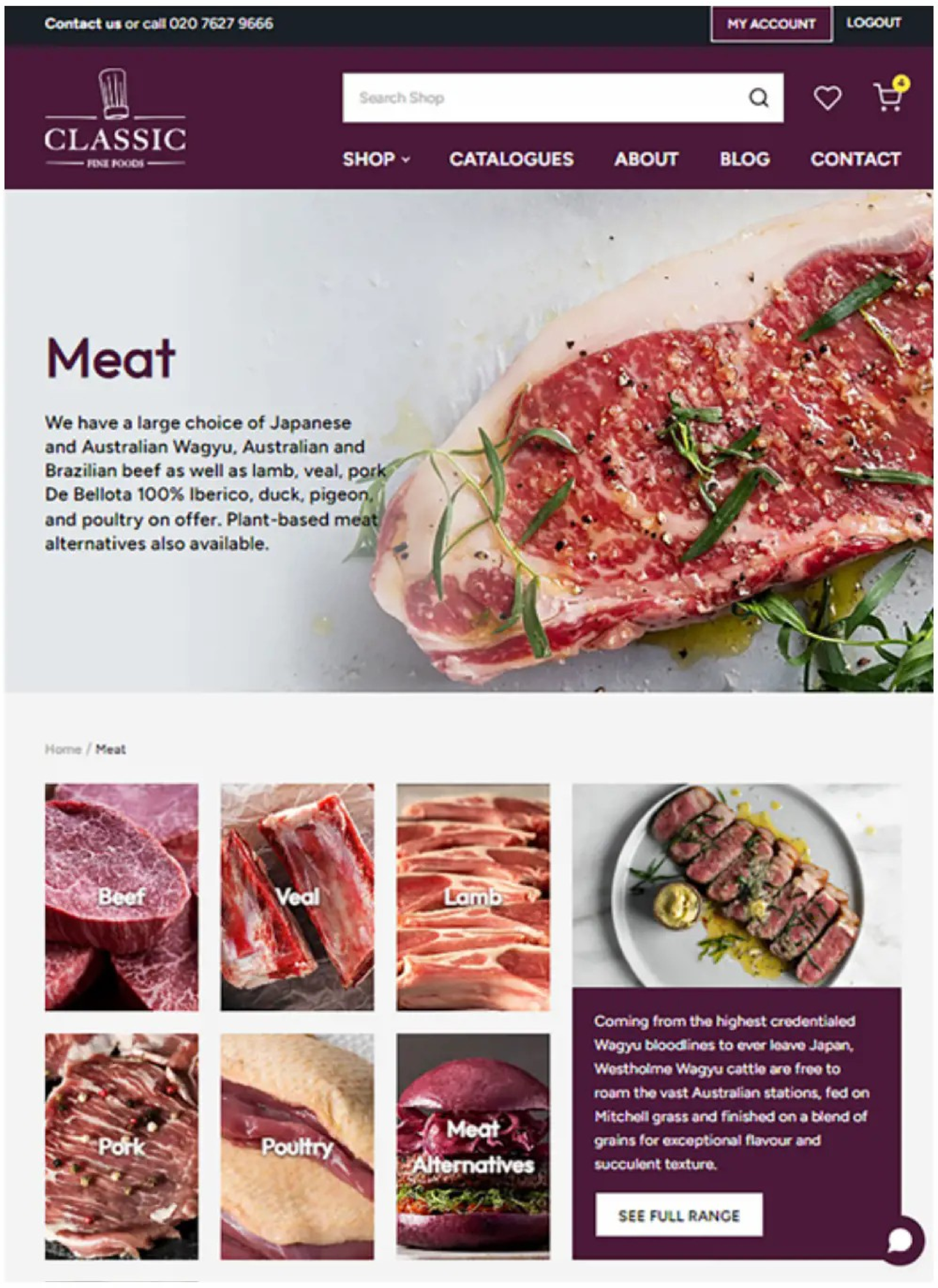
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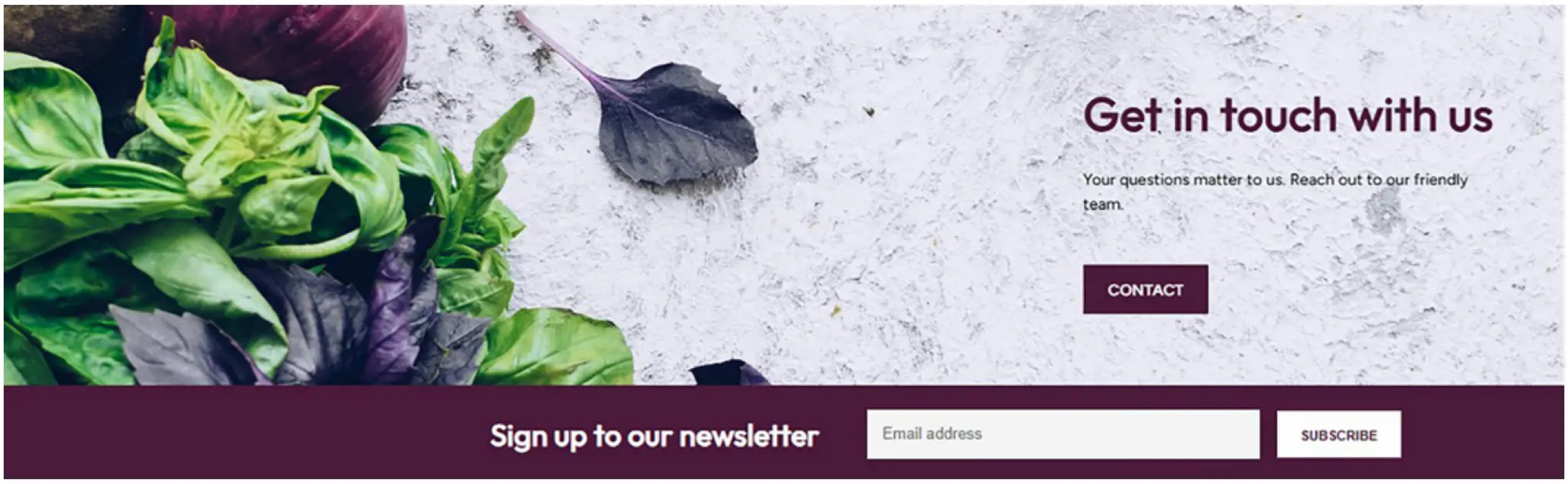
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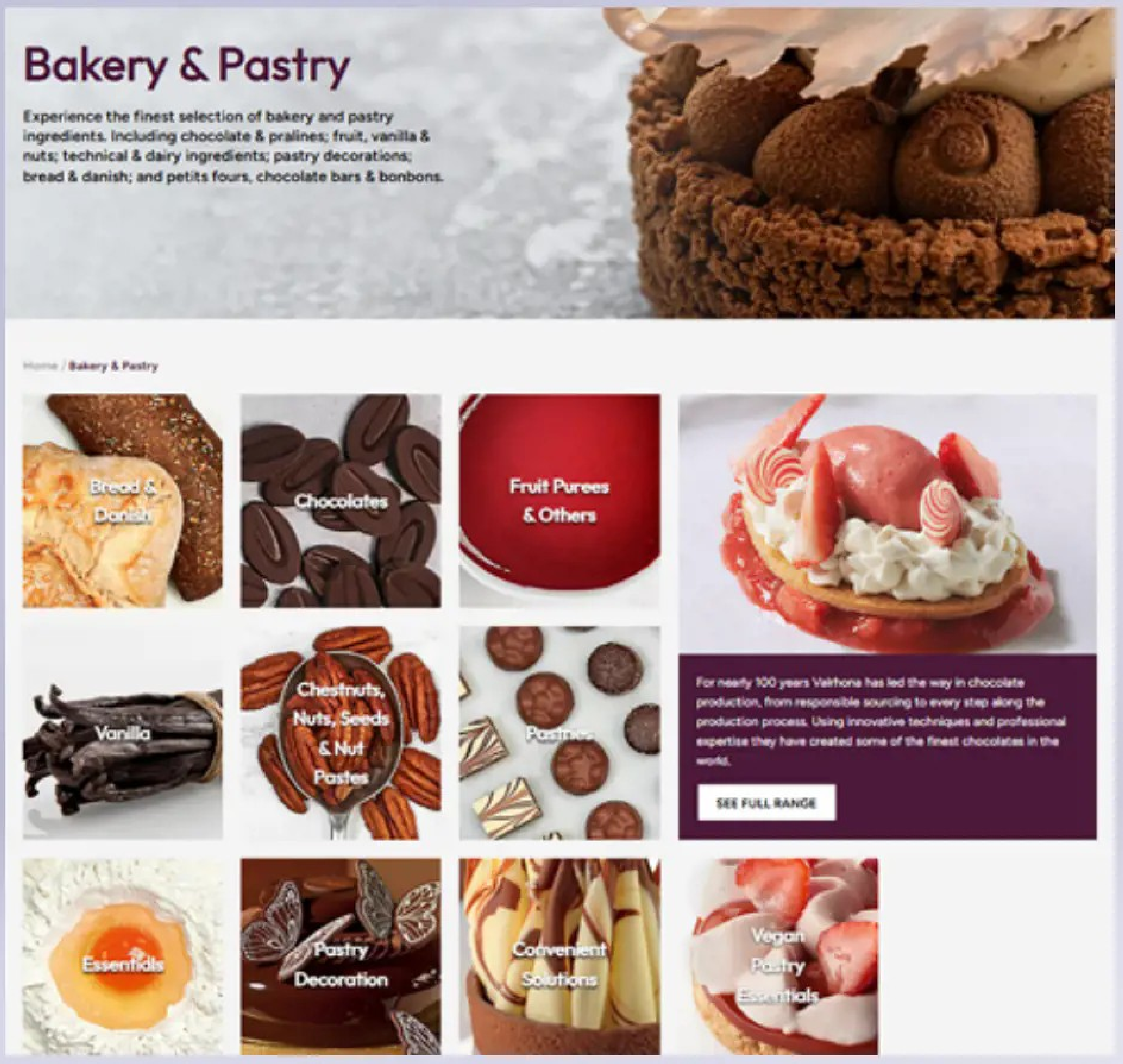
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Interiors and portrait of Larry – Justin De Souza
Food and Larry at the kitchen pass – Lateef Okunnu
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# LARRY JAYASEKARA

> “IT'S NOT JUST A COMPETITION. YOU'RE PUTTING YOUR CAREER ON THE TABLE IN FRONT OF 15 OR 20 JUDGES WHO ARE WELL RESPECTED AND AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME. IF YOU MESS UP SOMETHING, THESE GUYS, THEY KNOW. NO ONE SHOULD LOOK AT IT AS A COMPETITION. YOU'RE TESTING YOUR SKILLS UNDER THE EYES OF THE LEADING PLAYERS IN THE PROFESSION”

Larry Jayasekara

“THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE,”CHEF LARRY JAYASEKARA RECOLLECTS OF HIS NATIONAL CHEF OF THE YEAR WIN IN 2016.

“You are laid bare for all the judges to see. “I entered twice and got to the final, thought I would give it one last shot and on the third time, I won. But those judges – I mean, trying not to be distracted by having Paul Ainsworth, Angela Hartnett, Monica Galetti or Jonny Lake walking around watching your every move! I remember one judge asking me why I was shaking? I just replied look around me – who wouldn't be shaking!”

Just a short walk from Green Park underground station and a stone’s throw from Berkeley Square - you find Bruton Place. Here, mews cottages and independent businesses comfortably sit side by side. Achingly cool coffee shops, delicatessens, pubs and restaurants give this tucked away corner of Mayfair something of a continental feel. One-way traffic only, hardly any noise, impeccably maintained properties, but still - a feeling of community. As I wait outside The Cocochine to meet chef Larry Jayasekara, businessowners, fine art dealers, chefs and residents greet one another in the morning sunshine. It is like the film production company, Working Title, have put together the perfect representation of an idyllic West London for a remake of a Notting Hill-esque film.

But this isn't a film set. This is Bruton Place. And, right in the middle of it is The Cocochine. Known for its ingredient-forward, modern European cuisine with global influences, the culinary style of NCOTY winner, Larry Jayasekara and his Cocochine is refined and technique-driven yet rooted in simplicity and seasonality. And, once you discover who has mentored and influenced this chef along his journey, you will see just how he has arrived at this point in his career. However, it was not that long ago that the success Larry has made, could only have been considered a pipe dream. For there are chefs who have had a difficult start in life – then there is Larry Jayasekara.

“I come from a very small fishing village near the coastal town of Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka. The community is just over two and a half thousand people. As a family, we just lived from tourism. Some days we didn't have food. So, food has always been significant for me – because there were times when our family just didn't have any. There were occasions when we would be able to get scraps of fish, that were trapped in the fishing nets. Not really fish for eating, but we could make a fish curry with rice that tasted of fish – yet had no fish in it. That was a luxury.”

Working locally from the age of 12 to support his family, Larry became a surf instructor for tourists in his late teens, “It was surfing that saved my life” he adds, “because through that job, I met my wife. We met, married and I moved to the UK to live with her.”

Giving up Sri Lanka for Devon, Larry arrived in the UK with no formal qualifications behind him. His search for local work was tough, “I had no skills, and couldn't get a job. But I did eventually manage to get a job as a binman, working for Torbay Council. After three months, a family friend had opened a Thai restaurant. I took a second job there, chopping vegetables and making rice, three nights a week for £3.50 an hour.”

The part-time job in a local restaurant sparked a passion for cooking professionally and Larry decided to pursue a career in culinary arts. He enrolled at South Devon college on

a two-year course, "The college found me a work placement in a place called The Grand Hotel in Torquay. It was a four-star hotel with one rosette. They were super supportive. The food was very simple. Lots of weddings and functions, a bar menu and a restaurant menu. But, as I became more interested in professional kitchens, I started to watch and read everything I could to learn more. One day I watched Gordon Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares. I remember turning to my wife and saying I wanted to work for Ramsay. I had never seen anything like it before, but I had to try."

"I arranged some sort of CV and sent it to several chefs. Jamie Oliver, Gary Rhodes, Jean-Christophe Novelli and Gordon Ramsay. Only the Gordon Ramsay Group decided to reply to me. I was asked to come for an interview with Angela Hartnett at The Connaught.

"I had never been to a city before and it was a massive eye opener. I went into those kitchens at the Connaught and was mesmerised by how the chefs moved, and the pace of the kitchen. It had a Michelin star – and I didn't fully understand what that meant, but I was lost. Angela gave me some great advice at the end of the interview – she suggested that I went back and gave myself another year in a hotel environment, concentrating on the restaurant rather than all the other foodservice areas. Then, she said, I should apply again in one year. I went back to The Grand, worked in their rosetted restaurant, after 12 months, I applied again."

This time, his trial interview was in a different Ramsay Group restaurant, "my next interview was with Marcus Waring at Petrus, St. James. This time I did it right. Alyn Williams was the head chef and after the interview, offered me a job. He asked when I could start. I said the following week."

The excitement at finally being able to work in a London restaurant meant that Larry jumped at the chance before working out the logistics, "I told my wife that I had agreed to turn up for work the following week. She pointed out that I had nowhere to live!"

Not one to let a small detail like homelessness deter him from starting work at Petrus, Larry found himself in a backpacker's hostel in Piccadilly, "it was a basic hostel, and uncomfortable at times. I would be lucky if I managed three or four hours of sleep a night. After living there for a month or so, one of the chefs at Petrus found me a room in Streatham, again I didn't realise how rough that area was at the time!"

His living conditions were not important, learning from one of the best took precedence over any discomfort he felt in his accommodation, "Marcus Wareing was on the pass every day - he is still one of the best. Very detail driven, super precise. The drive of the whole team was inspirational. Everyone was always on top of their game. Without doubt, Marcus is one of the best cooks I could have learned from. I joined as a commis chef. After just over 2 ½ years, I was a junior sous."

Having cut his teeth in London, Larry then headed out of town for a while to The Waterside Inn. He dropped down to a chef de partie role to get him into the three Michelin starred brigade, "How many chefs have the Roux family put out into the world? Not to the country, to the world. The Waterside Inn still carries the excellence of what they started from day one. That's a lot of commitment.

"At the Waterside, it's more than just the skill of cooking, it's the whole package. How you present, how you talk, how you mentor, how you do everything. Pure, excellent and authentic hospitality. I was there in 2007, so very fortunate to have been there not just with Alain Roux, but with Michel Roux Sr too. After working at The Waterside for a while,

it was Michel Sr who suggested it would be beneficial for my career to spend some time in France. I asked him where I should go, he recommended working for Michel Bras. It was Michel Sr who picked up the phone and arranged a job for me."

Larry spent two years working in France at the legendary three-Michelin-starred Restaurant Bras in Laguiole. At the time, he didn't speak a word of French - he had to use a dictionary just to read the menus - but that didn't stop him. He threw himself into the experience, "It was one of the best times of my career. The kitchen was calm, super organised, and ran with total precision. There was mutual respect among the team, no shouting, just the quiet sounds of food being prepared with care. It was a huge learning curve, but one that helped shape the kind of chef I am today."

When his two years in Laguiole were up, Larry returned to the UK, this time to Oxfordshire and the two Michelin starred Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, "Another proper institute. I don't believe there is a better place in the UK to teach young chefs how to respect produce like Le Manoir. You start to learn, respect and care for every single ingredient. Every young chef should spend time somewhere as passionate about produce as Le Manoir is.

"The produce is the foundation to everything we do as chefs. At Le Manoir, you're just in an extraordinarily privileged bubble, learning all the time. The gardens at Le Manoir are outstanding. You learn from the chefs and from the gardening team. Chefs spend time in the gardens and become involved in the harvesting or planting. You get excited when you see something is close to harvest. Ultimately, all the chefs who leave Le Manoir do so with an enormous respect for Mother Nature and what she provides when she is cared for and respected, and how we, as chefs, must, in return, respect the produce."

The city then beckoned once more and Larry was reunited with Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley, "Marcus invited me back as senior sous chef, and I jumped at the chance. After working for him back in my very early days, I never forgot that it was his kitchen that gave me my first real opportunity. I was married, had a young son and everything felt settled. Then my wife was diagnosed with bowel cancer and everything fell apart."

Larry had no option other than to give up working and concentrate on his family, "we were living in Thame, and I couldn't work for nine months. I had to be there for my wife and son. I picked up a few shifts in a local hotel, just to have some casual income coming in – but there was no way I could dedicate as much of myself to a kitchen as I had been."

Remarkably, Larry's wife pulled through her cancer treatment and was one of the lucky patients who got to ring the bell at the end of her treatments, "I will always be indebted to the NHS for saving her life. I don't mind admitting I was terrified for a while. The thought of raising my son without her was beyond awful. As she headed towards her recovery, I took a phone call from Clare Smyth. She was asking how my wife was, what the situation was looking like and whether it could be time for me to return to work. She suggested, when the time was right, that I could return to Petrus and work just two or three days a week.

"My wife and her family were super supportive. The chemotherapy was finished and my wife told me to go for it. I don't mind admitting that I thought my time working at places like Petrus

was done. I thought that maybe I would look for a teaching position in a culinary school, that I should set my dreams of my own place one day aside. Going back to Petrus as senior sous chef very quickly went from four days a week, to full time as head chef. That same year I won National Chef of the Year."

From 2016 to 2018, Larry was the head chef at Petrus. He retained, and won again, the restaurant's Michelin star. By this time, Larry had met Tim Jefferies, the owner of Hamiltons Gallery and a prominent figure in the art world. Together they shared a vision of a new restaurant project, "Tim sourced the investment we would need, and we began looking for a permanent site. It took a couple of years to find this Bruton Place opportunity but before then…the pandemic."

The Covid-19 Pandemic gave Larry "an opportunity to say thank you to the NHS for saving my wife's life and allowing my son to grow up with his mother by his side. You can't say thank you in money or materials. This was the perfect situation for me to step up and support the NHS. I was at Tim's house with one of our investors who owns our farm. They were chatting about doing something to help the NHS workers and he asked how many covers I thought I could produce every day. I replied that I had been cooking 60 covers a day. But that was nowhere near enough. We needed to provide meals for 700 a day at University College Hospital London. I was undeterred by the number, I said I would give it my best shot. I had to, I owed it to the NHS to do this."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Larry stepped up to support NHS workers on the front lines. With hospitals under huge pressure and staff working exhausting hours, Larry and his business partners knew food could be a powerful way to show appreciation and provide comfort, "We chatted about providing these meals on the Friday and by the following Monday, I had recruited 23 chefs to help. D&D had agreed to give us the use of the kitchens at Pont de la Tour, we had started to order plastic containers, arrange all the logistics, refrigerated storage and transportation. We started at 600 portions a day sent to UCLH and eight other hospitals. 10 days later we were supplying 1500 meals a day. I felt good going home at the end of the day, knowing I was doing something worthwhile."

The goal was simple: make sure the people caring for everyone else were also being cared for. But he didn't stop there. Over the course of the pandemic, Larry was involved in cooking around 247,000 meals for NHS workers. It wasn't just about feeding people, it was about lifting spirits and showing solidarity during a tough time. He brought in other chefs, rallied support, and kept the momentum going throughout the crisis, "I will never forget taking boxes of meals to UCLH and the queues of ambulances waiting to go in. Or the enormity of the logistics. Every day, one portion of food had to be put through the laboratory to check for any viruses. We were all cooking in PPE and observed distancing and hygiene – but no risks could be taken with the health of the NHS workers. This was the situation we were in. We were catering for 172 different nationalities with 900 meat-based dishes and 600 vegetarian."

The gargantuan effort wasn't about headlines or recognition. It was about Larry and his chefs doing what they could with what they had. Coupled with catering for the NHS, Larry was also tasked with producing 5000 Christmas cakes for the ARC Foundation – a charitable organisation supporting young people with disabilities. His actions - and the actions of those who worked alongside him - during the pandemic became one of the most meaningful chapters of his career.

## THE COCOCHINE

When the world started to open, Larry and Tim found the perfect site for their restaurant in Bruton Place, "This building was a townhouse, with a shop on the ground floor. It had never been a restaurant before. So, when we took it over – we couldn't operate as a restaurant.

"We took all the floors down, put in new foundations, and rebuilt it. The ground floor to be the restaurant, the basement to be a cellar. The kitchen is on the first floor with a countertop table and a private dining room.

"It took time, about one year, to get the permissions to change the usage of the building to a restaurant and get all the licenses. It wasn't too bad because we did everything as it should be done. We are very environmentally conscious. We don't use gas, we use electric, so there's no carbon. We want to try to be as sustainable as possible."

While waiting for all the work to be done, Larry and Tim sought to find other premises for a more casual concept. Right across the street from The Cocochine, Larry and Tim have opened a laid-back spot called The Rex Delicatessen. Set in a beautifully restored old Victorian stable, The Rex has a cozy, character-filled vibe that feels both classic and modern.

By day, The Rex is a deli and café. Come the evening, the space transforms into a casual bistro. Open seven days a week, The Rex was created with the same level of care and detail as The Cocochine, with a relaxed, community-focused feel. The instant popularity of The Rex required the pair to find a preparation kitchen for the chefs to operate out of. With the building being listed, a full kitchen could not be installed in the stable, "fortunately, number 44 came up. We acquired that and turned the space into our prep area. The Rex is exceptionally busy, so finding that was a godsend."

The small empire does not end there. Now with two businesses in the same street and an ever-growing team of people, Larry and Tim had to look at facilities for their teams, "we acquired yet another premises on Bruton Place. This one to provide shower rooms, a restroom and changing rooms for the teams. Looking after our people is a priority. A space for them to shower, change or relax is as important to us as their work life balance. We close for the whole of August and for almost 3

weeks over Christmas and New Year, so they can plan proper holidays. Plus, they get extra weeks they can take throughout the working year. We also have our own laundry in the same building – just a few steps from The Cocochine."

Now open for just over 12 months, The Cocochine has emerged as both a favourite among local residents and a destination for discerning foodies. With a private 4 ½ kitchen garden, nestled within a country estate in Northamptonshire and access to superior seafood from a privately owned island off the northwest of Scotland – not to mention a business closed for the entire month of August and for 3 weeks over Christmas and New Year, Chef Larry and his whole team at Cocochine have found the perfect balance. Incredible produce, a true work/life balance, a customer base of both familiar and new faces and a work address that many would consider highly aspirational.

The Cocochine's interior feels more like a beautifully curated private home than a traditional restaurant. Spread across four floors of the historic Mayfair townhouse, every space is thoughtfully designed with a mix of comfort, elegance, and artistic flair.

On the ground floor, the main dining room seats just 28 guests, keeping things intimate and relaxed. The lighting is warm and subtle, designed to make everyone feel at ease without harsh shadows. A leather-wrapped handrail guides you upstairs, where you'll find a striking mosaic floor and a sleek seven-seat chef's counter overlooking the kitchen - a spot for those who enjoy watching the action up close.

Downstairs, the wine cellar is a real hidden gem, filled with carefully chosen bottles, from well-known classics to rare finds. And at the top of the townhouse is a dramatic private dining room with a double-height ceiling and natural light pouring in from vaulted skylights.

Originally a photography studio, this space now features bold artworks - including pieces by Warhol - and eye-catching design elements like a sculptural lamp by Nacho Carbonell.

The overall vibe of The Cocohine is refined but not stuffy, nor intimidating. Every detail -from the art on the walls to the shape of the lighting – feels carefully considered but not overdone. It's luxurious in a way that is both personal and welcoming.

As for his menus, Larry is driven by his access to their private kitchen gardens and Scottish island, "100% my menus are created around what we are lucky to have access to. What's coming from our farm, what's coming from around the island in Scotland, and if we need to change, we change. At the end of the day, I want to have customers who keep coming back. The Cocochine is not a club, but it's kind of a club vibe sometimes, because once people in this area choose a place, they will return. Some evenings we are full of regulars. We're doing well, but I feel we can do better. We have a tasting menu and an a la carte. Our diners have a choice. If they want to have two courses, they can have two courses.

"We don't turn tables; people have the space for the whole service. Our private dining room is like a home – there is a lounge with a fireplace, private restrooms and a table that seats 16. It's a super private space.

## ON GORDON RAMSAY

"I will always have respect for Gordon and his restaurant group. They were the only one to reply to me and offer to interview me all those years ago. If I had not gone back to Petrus after my wife's illness, I would never have been able to say I retained a Michelin star and went on to win one in my own right. That only happened because Gordon gave that opportunity to me. I'm always respectful of that. I had the chance to cook the food that I believed in. Gordon would arrive several times a year and taste the food. He never once told me what I 'must' do – he gave me feedback if something needed adjusting or congratulated me when he liked something.

"But I understood what the style needed to be. Petrus was a classical French restaurant. I had to keep to the style and respect Gordon's name. At the end of the day, it was Gordon's restaurant, not mine. I was just a head chef. I was there to keep the quality and the standard of the restaurant going."

## ON HIS FARM

Larry's food philosophy is built around its strong connection to Rowler Farm, a regenerative farm in the Northamptonshire countryside within a 1100-acre private estate. The farm is an essential part of how the restaurant operates and where many of the ingredients on the menu begin their journey.

The farm grows a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and edible flowers, all with a focus on sustainability, working in harmony with the land. It's also home to livestock such as native and rare-breed pigs, beef cattle, lamb, and game, giving Larry unique access to an incredible portfolio of top-quality produce. There is no poultry at present, the threat of bird flu has put any idea of raising chickens on the backburner. Instead, Larry buys top quality Poulet de Bresse from a London supplier.

Larry and his chefs are hands-on with the farm. Just an hour and ten minutes from London, they visit regularly, walking the fields and checking in with the growers to stay in tune with what's in season and what's tasting best. This direct connection allows Larry to build menus around the freshest ingredients - often harvesting something one day and serving it the next.

"I go every Sunday. And there are always one or two of my chefs that ask to come with me. It's always exciting to arrive and see what has changed in a week. We just jump in a buggy and drive around the estate, visiting the gardens. The estate belongs to one of my business partners – it is his private home. When we started planning The Cocochine, he suggested that we work with his gardeners, and they could grow what we need.

"There are 10 gardeners in the team. And we have pretty much everything. We are trying to get to a point when it can sustain the restaurant for the whole year. Winter months are more challenging, because there is little variety available. We don't use any chemicals or supplements - everything is naturally grown.

"What we don't take to the restaurant and deli - any surplus or unused vegetables and fruit is fed to the animals, so the quality of our meat is unbelievable. All the flowers used in the restaurant are from the farm – that alone saves the business £3000 per month, and our flowers are so beautiful, they have a real scent of an English country garden. In the winter months, we use dried flowers from the estate. We make syrups, right now we are making pine syrup because the pine shoots have come. Elderflower, too. Our cocktails are made using only our farm syrups. We have a lot of meadow sweet syrup, and a crazy amount of blackberry.

"I mean this is a dream come true for any chef. Yes, it is an hour and 10 minutes away, but the stuff we get is beyond amazing. Every year we hold our staff party on the estate. All the teams come over, we have a huge BBQ and beers and get to hang out all together in this amazing place. I feel so lucky and privileged to have this."

## THE PRIVATE SCOTTISH ISLAND

As if having a Northamptonshire private estate growing your produce wasn't the pinnacle of a professional kitchen, there is one other unique element to the dishes at The Cocochine. His business partner also owns an island called Tanera Mòr, the largest of the Summer Isles off the northwest coast of Scotland. This means that The Cocochine have unrivalled access to the finest fish and seafood, "the island fishermen give us the first choice of the fish and shellfish landed. It's the best seafood in the world. When you see how clean the water is, it's unbelievable. We get scallops, crab, lobster and langoustine that are off the scale.

“Again, this is the stuff of dreams. When my team and I see the quality of seafood coming through our doors, it is both exciting and humbling. There is a reason so much Scottish seafood is exported out to other countries – it is, by far, the best quality seafood in the world. And, thanks to my business partner, my customers have access to that.”

## ON HIS NCOTY WIN

“It was lobster’ he recalls, “I did a lobster dish with lemongrass, sea vegetables and chard leaf. Then venison with Cavallo Nero, a chocolate jus and blackberries. Then a chocolate cremeaux with pear and tempered chocolate.”

Mentoring him along his journey was his good friend, Graham Hornigold, “Graham has always been right by my side when I have needed him. He is such a lovely bloke, very supportive and always available. And I needed that support. The final goes in the blink of an eye, right? Now, I think there is an extra hour given. But when I entered, there was no time to waste – you had to understand the best way of managing yourself with such a short amount of time. The first time I did it, I was lost. The second time, I began to understand - you must be able to explain to the judges what you're doing but not get distracted. The work must go on, otherwise you'll never be able to finish on time. That was the part I have learned in the previous two years that I entered. You can't stop. Explain while you work, the judges understand. You don't have to look at them and stop to have a chat. The third time I entered, I won.”

## ON THE FUTURE

“I want to focus solely on Cocochine and developing my team here. There are 25,000 restaurants in London – how can we be different to what everybody else does? What makes us unique?

“I'm in the kitchen every day. I don't go and open restaurants around the world. I feel it's a duty I have to both my guests and the team. I want to see my guests. And, for the team, I believe there has to be guidance. They want the presence of the person at the top. The chef they have come to work for. I am fortunate to have a great team, and I want to support them, in whatever they want to do. I want to be here to watch them grow – not just check in with them every few months. For example, I have two kitchen porters who have decided to train as chefs because they became inspired after a few months. I think that’s amazing. Not that long ago, I was a binman in Devon, who could only dream of these kinds of opportunities

“I still learn every day. I don't want to copy any other chef's food, and I want to cook what I believe in. I want to serve guests food that is undeniably my style. I'm not doing anything people haven’t seen before. It's all about the quality of our ingredient and the execution of our dishes. It has to be a tasty plate of food. It's as simple as that.

## ON LUCK AND HARD WORK

“I'm privileged and lucky. Yes, you've got to make your own luck - but luck comes with three things. Commitment, honesty and loyalty. Without paying attention to those three things, luck can be wasted.

“Don't move around to a new job every few months. Commit time to a role, to a kitchen. Money will come. But you've got to learn your skill set first. Every day you learn something from somebody. You will never put a full stop in gastronomy, thinking “oh, I know now.”

“It's about hard work. And you've got to understand that nothing is personal during service. If someone speaks bluntly or curtly, it is not personal. During service, we all have a duty to deliver. This job is all about direction. You have guests sitting on the table. We are all human. When we are hungry, we want to eat now. So, we have got to deliver. And to deliver that, I call it a jigsaw.

“There are so many puzzle pieces that must come together, to complete that dish. If one puzzle is behind or missing, it affects the whole circuit. And you're never able to catch up, when one thing goes wrong. The question is - how quickly can we fix that and get back on track to finish the service? So, to get back on track, the atmosphere may be a little tense. Not bullish or aggressive – just focussed, quiet and fast.

‘When service is finished, it's gone. Tomorrow is another day. This is the part we all must understand. These situations will always happen in environments like kitchens. You have to bounce back and be willing to learn from things. If you don't learn from experiences, what's the point in having them?”

## AND THE NAME?

My business partners daughter is named Coco – and that was the name we originally wanted, but we couldn't call it Coco Mayfair, because there is the Coco Club in Camden. They would have an objection. When Coco was a toddler, her dad used to call her ‘Cocochine.’ It is such a lovely name that we decided to use that. Our deli is also named after his son, Rex. Having these very personal touches to the businesses really reinforces how loved these places are by everyone involved with them. To have them named after the most important people in my business partners life is incredibly special.”

# LANGOUSTINES

## QUALITY CHEFS CHOOSE.
## FLAVOUR THEY CELEBRATE.
## ALWAYS NAMED.
## ALWAYS SCOTTISH.

FROM OUR RUGGED COASTLINES
TO THE WORLD'S TOP KITCHENS –
SCOTTISH LANGOUSTINE LEADS THE WAY.

With their delicate, sweet meat, Scottish langoustines are a showstopping ingredient in any dish. The tender tail offers a subtle richness that pairs beautifully across cuisines, while the claw meat melts on the palate. Even the shells bring value - creating deeply flavoured stocks and standout sauces.

Their brilliant, reddish-orange shells, narrow claws and slender bodies look fantastic on the plate. But it's not just their looks that have cultivated a strong fan base: their quick cooking time and renowned flavour make them an asset in fast-paced kitchens.

While the tail meat often takes centre stage, larger langoustines also offer intact claw meat that's equally impressive. And with gross profit in mind, thoughtful chefs make the most of every part - transforming shells, heads, and smaller claws into snacks, bisques, or deeply flavoured stocks. They're quick to cook, and incredibly versatile: whether steamed, boiled, grilled or fried, they always come out beautifully with minimal effort required to make this delicacy shine.

Langoustines' subtle flavour pairs well with a wide range of flavours and cuisines. Garlic and butter complement their delicate taste, while fresh herbs, citrus or white wine add a burst of freshness and acidity. Creamy sauces enhance langoustines' velvety texture and accentuate their richness.

For many chefs around the world, "langoustine" is synonymous with "Scotland," and for good reason. Our cold, pristine waters are an ideal breeding ground, consistently producing shellfish with unmatched flavour. In fact, 43% of the world's langoustines are caught off our coasts in the North Sea and inshore waters – a testament not just to our abundance, but to the trust chefs place in Scottish quality.

Langoustines are also subject to quotas to protect them from overfishing, safeguarding the continuity of the population for generations to come.

This approach, together with other examples of best practice – such as using special nets with openings for other species of fish to escape – ensures marine life can thrive.

When you serve Scottish langoustine, you're serving more than exceptional seafood. You're sharing a story of provenance, sustainability, and true craftsmanship. They're delicious and deserve a prime spot on any menu.

## DID YOU KNOW...

To help enhance the consistency and quality of Scottish langoustines, Seafood Scotland has partnered with the fishing industry to develop the Scottish Quality Langoustine scheme. My colleague, programme manager Matthew Hurst, is working with the programme to set new industry standards for best practice in handling, processing and traceability, reinforcing the excellent reputation of Scotland's premium langoustines.
*Adam Wing, Head of Trade Marketing – UK, Middle East and Asia, Seafood Scotland*

## A LANGOUSTINE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

**LANGOUSTINES GO BY SEVERAL OTHER NAMES WORLDWIDE:**

*__Dublin Bay prawn__ (common in Ireland and North America)
*__Norway lobster__ (frequently found in Scandinavia)
*__Scampi__ (popular in the UK and Italy)
*__Nephrops or Nephrops Norvegicus__ (used in scientific classification)

But in the fishing communities of North-East Scotland, you'll hear them called 'praans'!

SEAFOOD SCOTLAND
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@SeafoodFromScotland
https://seafoodscotland.org/

SEAFOOD SCOTLAND

# LANGOUSTINE TACOS

flour tortillas, basil aioli, pickled red onion, orange

- 24 langoustines
- 300ml vegetable oil

### FLOUR TORTILLAS

- 100g sourdough starter
- 25ml olive oil
- 75ml water
- 200g plain flour
- 1tsp salt
- 1tsp baking powder

### BASIL AIOLI

- 100g basil
- 250ml vegetable oil
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 clove confit garlic

### PICKLE LIQUOR

- 375ml white wine vinegar
- 125ml apple cider vinegar
- 200ml water
- 250g castor sugar
- 1 star anise
- 2 cloves
- ½ cinnamon stick
- 5g fennel seeds
- 1 orange, segmented
- 2 little gem lettuce, shredded
- 8 radishes, thinly sliced

### LANGOUSTINES

Sedate in freezer (30 mins), dispatch, blanch (10 secs), ice bath.
Shell, devein, skewer tails.

### SHELLFISH OIL

Roast heads/claws, cover with veg oil, infuse low heat (1 hr), strain.

### TORTILLAS

Make dough, rest (1 hr). Press 12g balls, cook (1 min/side) on hot skillet. Keep warm.

### PICKLED ONION

Boil pickle liquor, cool. Dilute 1:1 with cold water. Add sliced red onion, infuse (10 mins), strain.

### BASIL AIOLI

Blanch + dehydrate basil (45°C, 1 hr), blitz with oil, strain. Emulsify with yolks, Dijon, vinegar, confit garlic. Pipe.

### FINISH

Grill langoustine skewers over charcoal, basting with shellfish oil.

*Build tacos:* basil aioli, lettuce, onion, radish, orange, langoustine.

Words Claire Bosi
Camera Jodi Hinds

THE WATERSIDE INN
40
SINCE 1985
The Fat Duck
heston blumenthal
RELAIS DESSERTS
Jeff Oberweis

> “You could feel the love in the room for this ground-breaking chef who **defines courage and inspires us all”**
>
> \- Alain Roux

OVER RECENT YEARS, CULINARY COLLABORATIONS OR 4-HANDS DINNERS HAVE BECOME SOMETHING OF A REGULAR FIXTURE ON THE GASTRONOMY CIRCUIT. FROM FRIENDS JOINING FRIENDS, OR INTERNATIONAL PEERS UNITING – IT IS RARE TO OPEN INSTAGRAM AND NOT SEE SOME ‘COLLAB’ OR OTHER HAPPENING IN A UK VENUE.

May 2025 saw perhaps the most unique and special collaboration that could ever tale place. A Unique Celebratory Dinner with Alain Roux & Heston Blumenthal at The Waterside Inn, Bray-on-Thames

Arriving in the early evening, all guests were personally greeted by both Alain and Heston before taking to the banks of the River Thames to enjoy a champagne reception before heading to their tables.

The eagerly awaited one-off collaboration dinner, created and hosted by Alain Roux alongside close friend and neighbour, Heston Blumenthal and was held to celebrate a unique collection of anniversaries.

The once-in-a-lifetime joint event was held to celebrate The Waterside Inn's incredible years of Three Michelin Stars (1985-2025) as well as 30 ground-breaking years since The Fat Duck launched, including its own 21 years of Three Michelin Stars (2004-2025).

The event featured an outstanding seven course menu showcasing the iconic dishes, finest Champagne, Grands Crus Classés wines and world class hospitality that epitomises these two iconic family-owned restaurants in the village of Bray-on-Thames. As you would expect from an occasion partnered with The Fat Duck, the evening reflected Heston's unique creative flair with theatrical presentations, unusual flavour combinations and playful surprises.

The event more than lived up to expectation as one of the most moving and memorable culinary highlights of the year, with guests fortunate to attend being welcomed like family to enjoy an extraordinary dining experience. All were spoiled by the warmest hospitality and plenty of fun and tales, courtesy of Heston and Alain.

The Three Michelin Star chefs were joined by friend and guest pastry chef, Jeff Oberweis, one of the world's finest master pâtissiers, who

THE WATERSIDE INN
40
SINCE 1985
30th
The Fat Duck
heston blumenthal
Alain Roux
RD RELAIS DESSERTS
Jeff Oberweis
OBERWEIS

holds the Royal Warrant to the Luxembourg Royal Family. Chef Oberweis created an exceptional signature dessert to complete the special dinner.

Alain and Heston led the praises for their remarkable teams for their outstanding support attention to detail, organisation, advance preparations, and teamwork. The Waterside Inn team was headed up by Executive Chef, Fabrice Uhryn, Head Chef Adam Wright, Culinary Instructor Michael Nizzero and General Manager, Frédéric Poulette. The Fat Duck's team were directed by Group Culinary Director, James 'Jocky' Petrie and Head Chef, Karl Jaques.

The event was supported by incredible partner suppliers who generously sponsored the evening with special thanks given to Aubrey Allen Ltd, Berkmann Wine Cellars Ltd, Flying Fish Seafoods Company Ltd, Hatch Mansfield Agencies Ltd, Nash & Sons Florist, Smith & Brock Ltd, Ulysse Cazabonne – Marchand de Vins.

The evening carried a deeper significance with the ticket price £1,985.00 per person inclusive of food, wines, service and VAT signifying the year when The Waterside Inn was first awarded Three Michelin Stars, namely 1985. The eighty-ticket event sold out within a few days of release and a significant waiting list ensued. Fifty percent of ticket sales were donated equally to charities close to Alain and Heston's hearts. The Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust, of which Alain Roux is Patron and Bipolar UK of which Heston is proud to be ambassador. A total donation circa £60,000 was shared equally between the charities.

Guests were treated to some fun, fabulous bespoke signature gifts to take home, including a signed menu, a jar of special recipe Roux homemade Champagne & Rose Petal Jelly to commemorate The Waterside Inn's 40th anniversary plus a specially commissioned chef's kitchen cloth embroidered with the 40th anniversary logo, and a freshly baked Saint-Genix Brioche. This is a speciality from Saint-Genix-sur-Guiers, in the Dauphiné former province of south-eastern France, a delicious pink praline brioche and Alain's 'coup de coeur' amongst France's traditional artisan pastries. Extra surprise gifts from The Fat Duck included an edible Mini Planet Heston Playbook, complete with

edible crayons and a specially designed illustrated mind map reflecting Heston's ideas and thoughts about the evening.

Speaking of the evening, Alain Roux said,
"It was a privilege and so much fun to share this special evening with my dear friend and neighbour, Heston and his team. It's the first time Heston has collaborated with a fellow chef, so it was a truly unforgettable occasion. You could feel the love in the room for this ground-breaking chef who defines courage and inspires us all.

More than a celebration, we seized the opportunity to spotlight our incredible teams, our loyal and generous suppliers, our wonderful guests, families and friends to whom we owe everything and on whose shoulders we stand.

The occasion presented an amazing opportunity to raise awareness and funds for two incredible charities that have huge personal significance for each of us and make such a powerful, life changing difference to sufferers' lives. Thank you to everyone for your amazing support and helping us to raise funds for these outstanding charities."

While Heston Blumenthal added,
"The Waterside Inn is of course a landmark in British cuisine, having retained three Michelin stars longer than any restaurant outside France, which is a tribute to the skill and precision of Michel and now Alain – two incredible chefs.

Working alongside Alain and his team for this extraordinary event has been full-on and such fun that I'm asking myself why it took us so long to get around to it.

This is what cuisine is all about – teamwork, creativity, rising to the challenge and making something beautiful and delicious. The fact that we could do all this and raise money for two vital charities is the icing on the cake!"

The two charities chosen by the chefs hold a deep significance for both. Until his father, the late Michel Roux OBE, received a diagnosis of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis in 2016, Alain had never heard of this debilitating, life limiting, incurable condition that kills more than 5,000 people every year in the UK. Alain leapt at the opportunity to

# THE FAT DUCK X THE WATERSIDE INN

## - MENU AND WINES:

**The Fat Duck & The Waterside Inn**
Nitro-Poached Apéritif and canapés
Taittinger "Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs 2005"

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**The Fat Duck**
"Aerated Beetroot Horseradish cream"
Bandol Rosé Château de Pibarnon 2023"

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**The Fat Duck**
"Tonic of Botanicals"
The Fat Duck Martini

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**The Waterside Inn**
"Poached skate wing Grenobloise, brown butter emulsion"
Meursault Les Clous, Domaine Camille et Guillaume Boillot 2022

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**The Waterside Inn**
"Pan fried lobster medallion and ginger flavoured vegetable julienne, white port sauce"
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc Magis Par Rotem et Mounir Saouma 2022

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**The Fat Duck**
"Mock Turtle Soup, Victorian toasted sandwich"
Auxey-Duresses Premier Cru, Domaine Comte Armand 2016

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**The Waterside Inn**
"Duo of roasted Pyrenean milk lamb, baby vegetables and morel mushrooms, minted hollandaise sauce"
Château Palmer Margaux, Bordeaux 2008

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**Jeff Oberweis**
"Dark Sáo Tomé chocolate dessert with bergamot scented pear, Koa sorbet"
Château Coutet, Sauternes-Barsac 2017

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**The Fat Duck**
"Like a Kid in a Sweet Shop"
Bas Armagnac, Domaine Castarède

become Patron to support The Trust and to share his own experience as a family member and carer for his father.

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust (PFT) works to raise awareness and funds for research to find a cure for this debilitating disease. Further, The Trust offers help, advice, information and gives practical, emotional and financial support to sufferers, carers and their families. This support can be in the form of mobility scooters to give patients independence or installing stairlifts in their home. The Trust also has a static caravan in Great Yarmouth where patients and their families can enjoy a well-deserved break.

Commenting on the fundraising event, Peter Bryce, Chairman said, "From the bottom of our lungs thank you so much for your incredible support. This amazing donation allows us to continue our work to help those affected by this terrible illness. We are eternally grateful."

Heston Blumenthal recently became an official ambassador for Bipolar UK, a charity that provides support and resources for individuals with bipolar disorder. This is a mental health condition characterised by significant mood swings, including mania, depression, hallucinations, paranoia and suicidal thoughts. Heston has shown great bravery through sharing publicly his own experience with the disorder, helping to raise awareness of the condition and its devastating impact.

CEO of. Bipolar UK, Simon Kitchen, 'We are deeply grateful that Heston Blumenthal is supporting Bipolar UK through this unique event. 1 in 50 people live with bipolar, and 1 in 12 people are affected through family and friends. As our newest ambassador, Heston has already made a significant impact by talking publicly about his diagnosis, helping to raise awareness and reduce stigma. We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who supported the event. The funds raised mean we can be there for many more people affected by bipolar when they need us most."

## 2025 – A SPECIAL YEAR OF CELEBRATION EVENTS:

A series of special events will be held at The Waterside Inn throughout the year to celebrate 40 years of 3 Michelin stars.

The Heston collaboration dinner kicked off a series of four exceptional dining events taking place throughout 2025, welcoming some of the world's most celebrated Three Star Michelin chefs to co-host exceptional dinners showcasing their extraordinary cuisine. An equal proportion of proceeds from the dinners will be donated to charities chosen by The Waterside Inn and the guest chefs. More details will follow.

Menu des Etoiles: an exceptional 7-course tasting experience featuring Roux classics with a twist. £275.00 per person.

Menu "Celebration": a unique 4-course menu inclusive of a glass of Alain Roux label Champagne, to run during October and November. £150.00 per person

CLASSIC
FINE FOODS

## TASTE THE SEASON

# SUMMER

SUMMER IS HERE, BRINGING A FRESH WAVE OF INSPIRATION IN BOTH PASTRY AND CUISINE. HERE AT CLASSIC FINE FOODS, WE'RE EXCITED TO UNVEIL OUR TOP SUMMER PICKS TO REFRESH YOUR MENUS AND EMBRACE THE VIBRANT FLAVOURS OF THE SEASON.

**Discover our curated selection of premium ingredients designed to elevate your seasonal Summer menus - from smooth, refreshing ice cream bases and indulgent flavours, to show-stopping grilling essentials like top-grade meats, vibrant seasonal produce and bold artisan rubs – and much more!**

## Perfect Grilling Meat & Seafood

Discover the perfect meats and premium seafood to fire up the grill and impress your guests.

Create showstopping sharing platters with Westholme's Wagyu Tomahawk and Bavette, which boast exceptional marbling and melt-in-your-mouth tenderness, or Angus Pure Beef's Brisket, known for being consistently flavoursome and tender.

Looking for local gems? Discover Dingley Dell's higher marbled, welfare-friendly British pork and Beechridge Farm's quality free-range British poultry.

Deep dive into delicious red carabineros and black tiger prawns from METRO Chef, or grilled octopus legs and Canadian lobster tails.

Craft flavour sensations with our Selected by Classic Fine Foods spices range, like Ras El Hanout, whole green peppercorns, smoked paprika, and so much more.

BONEMASTERS
-UK-

PURE INGREDIENTS
FOR SERIOUS KITCHENS

## Stock, the foundations & starting point

Bonemasters pride themselves on their expert knowledge and passion for what they do. Loved by chefs across the world, their products are traditional and meet the highest quality standards.

Bonemasters' stocks, glaces and jus are crafted using traditional open kettle method and 100% natural ingredients.

This summer, glaze your open-grilled steaks with quality beef stock from Bonemasters or serve family-style crispy roast chicken, kept moist with their delicious chicken stock.

Discover ready-to-use stocks with real clarity and depth of flavour that you don't have to intervene with.

## Seasonal Fresh Produce

Delight your guests with a variety of seasonal fresh produce perfect for grilling and serving to share. From sweet Corn on the Cob to umami-rich Shitake and Oyster Mushrooms. Add showstopping veg platters by chargrilling Hispi Cabbage and discover time-saving frozen grilled vegetables from METRO Chef.

From the UK, we have a wide variety of Isle of Wight tomatoes in season. With classic vine to cherry to mixed heritage, at Classic Fine Foods, we have everything you need to make delicious summer salads, tarts, pastas and more.

Discover a variety of delicious seasonal stone fruits, like yellow peaches and white nectarines. Throw them on the grill and pair with creamy, luxurious Italian burrata from or plant-based Burrella.

## Frozen Delights

Summer isn't complete without a touch of frozen indulgence. At Classic Fine Foods, we want everyone to master the perfect scoop of ice cream.

From technical ingredients from Sosa and Louis François, ice cream bases and essentials from Montebianco, Stella & Anselmi , indulgent chocolate couvertures from Valrhona and Veliche, or delicious fruit flavourings with Ponthier frozen fruit purees and our selection of seasonal berries and stone fruits. We even have a range of delicious ready-made options from Ice Cream Union.

Craft unique and luxurious sorbets and ice creams using our selection of high-quality ice cream ingredients for a decadent and refreshing dessert option this summer.

CLASSIC
FINE FOODS

**We invite all culinary professionals to explore our 2025 Summer Inspiration now. Scan the QR code to browse our website and start transforming your seasonal menus!**

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MANEKI
RAMEN
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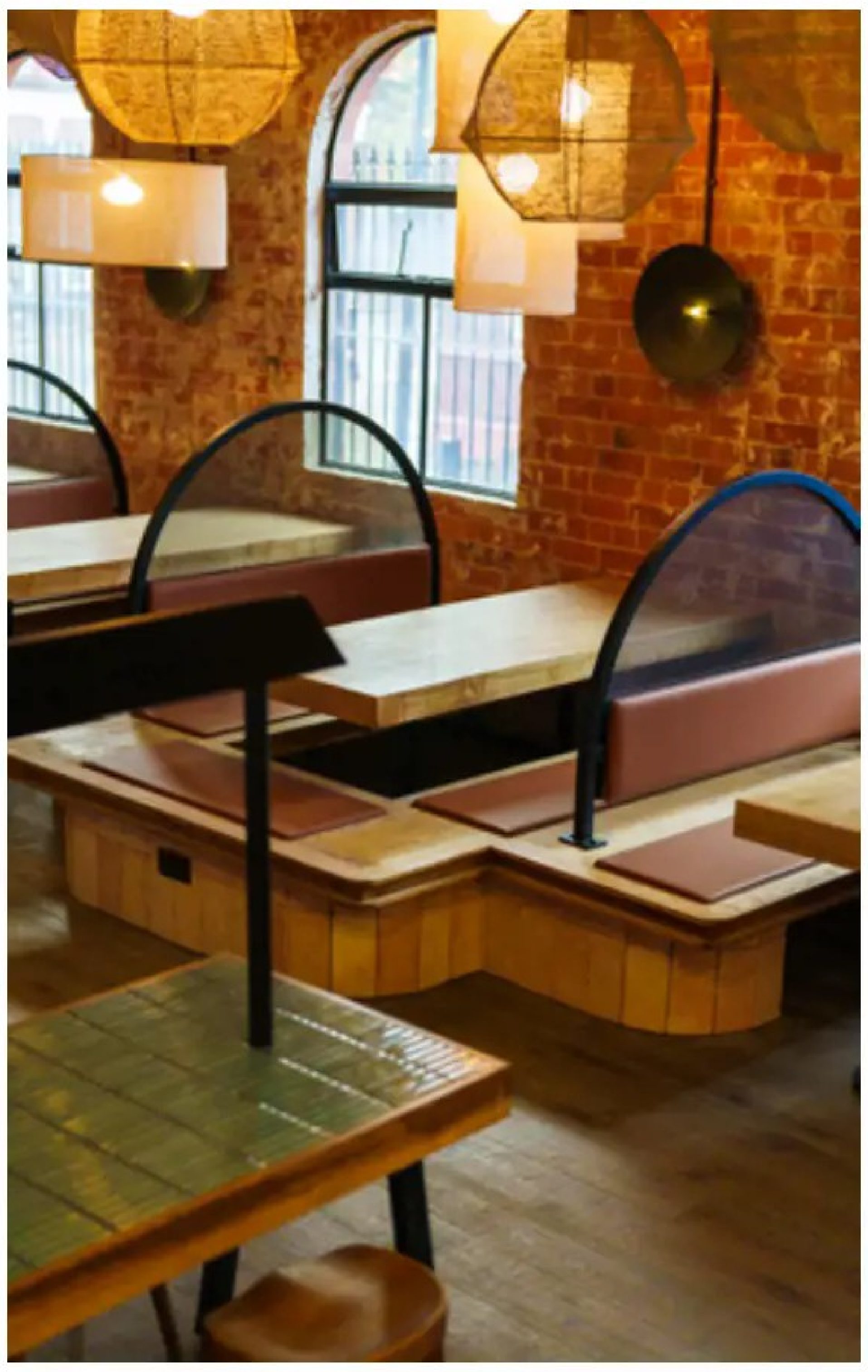
# THE MANEKI WAY

WE TALK TO **PETE DOVASTON** OF MANEKI RAMEN AS THEY PREPARE TO OPEN THEIR SECOND SITE IN BIRMINGHAM

There's a quiet hum of precision in the kitchen at Maneki Ramen, but behind the seamless flow of steaming broths and noodles lies a story built on happenstance, hustle, and a relentless pursuit of flavour. At the helm is a chef who didn't plan on a culinary career - but found one anyway, quite by accident.

"I actually fell into kitchens by chance," Pete says, recalling his first taste of cooking. "I was working behind the bar at a small pub in Worcester when the chef didn't turn up one day. I jumped in to help and never looked back."

That one night behind the stoves sparked a career that would take him from local pubs to some of the world's most acclaimed kitchens. With stints in Michelin-starred restaurants in Tokyo, New York, and Beijing, he picked up more than passport stamps—he learned the value of discipline, precision, and the kind of layered flavour that only time and



technique can build. "Those experiences taught me the fundamentals. They form the backbone of everything we do at Maneki."

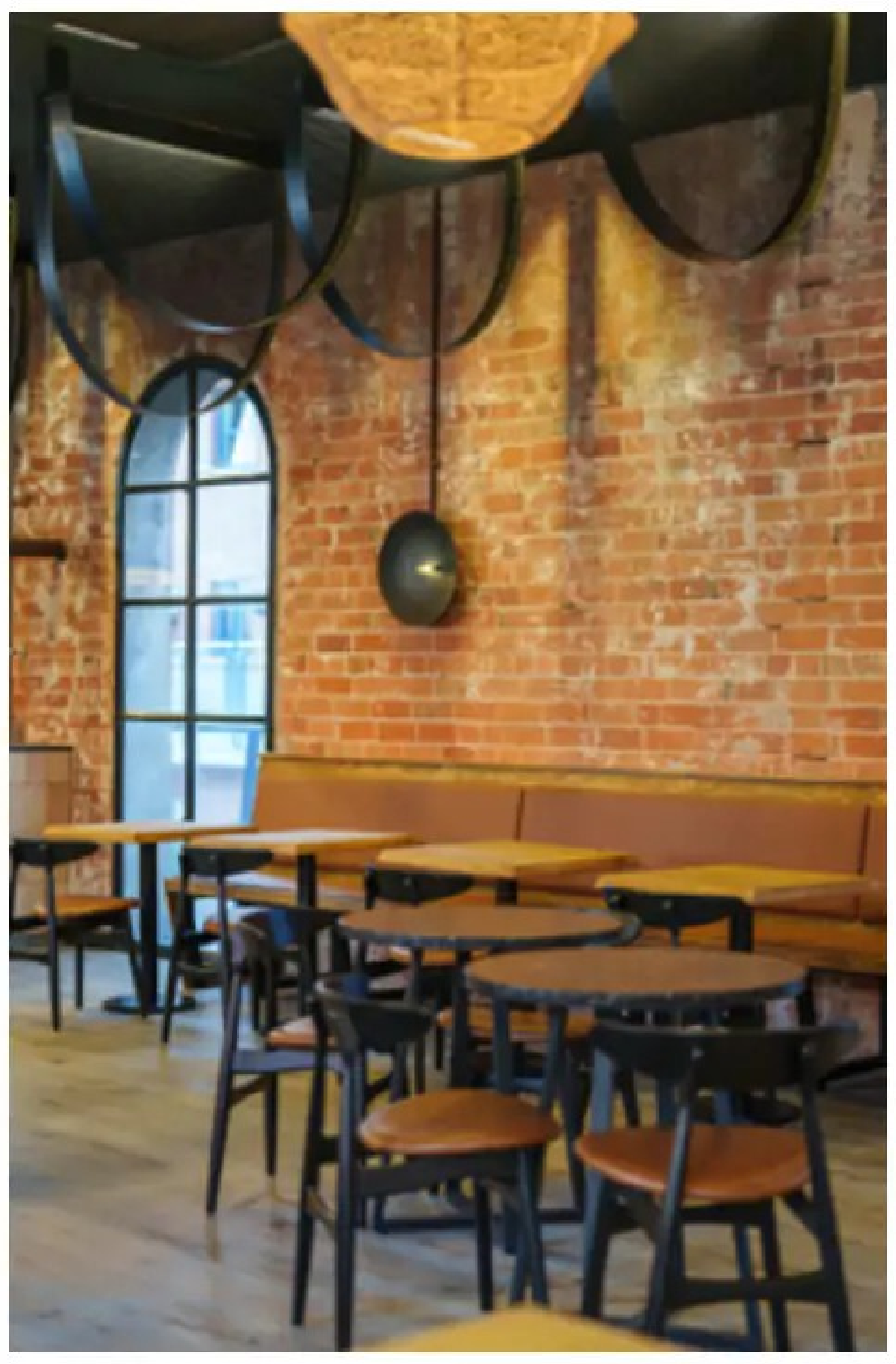
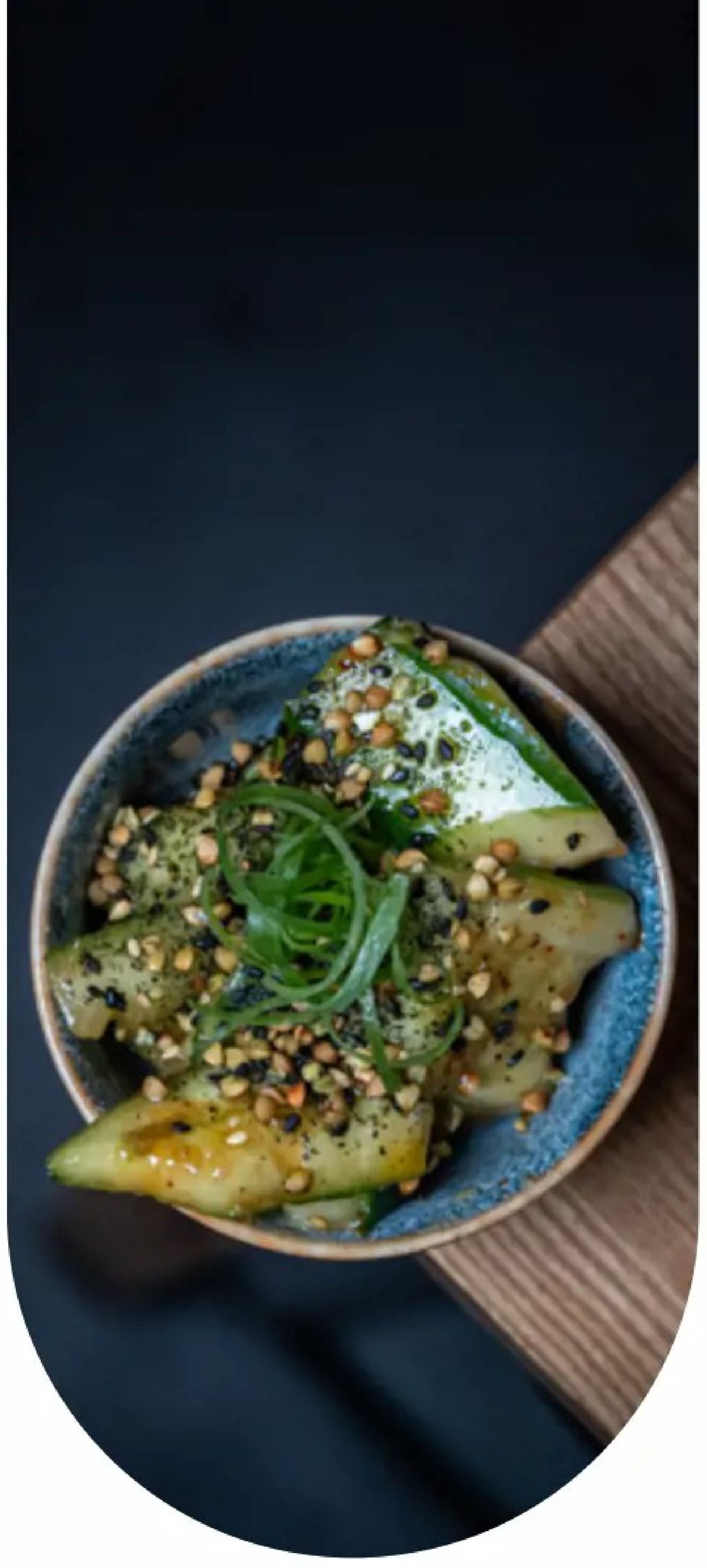
Now, back where it all began, he's bringing that global training home with a menu that's bold, balanced, and proudly rooted in seasonality. The standout? "Right now, I'd say the Roast Duck Sichuan Ramen," he says without hesitation. "It's got this brilliant balance—a little spicy, a little sour, rich but clean broth, crispy duck, and the crunch of pickled radishes. Every element complements the other."

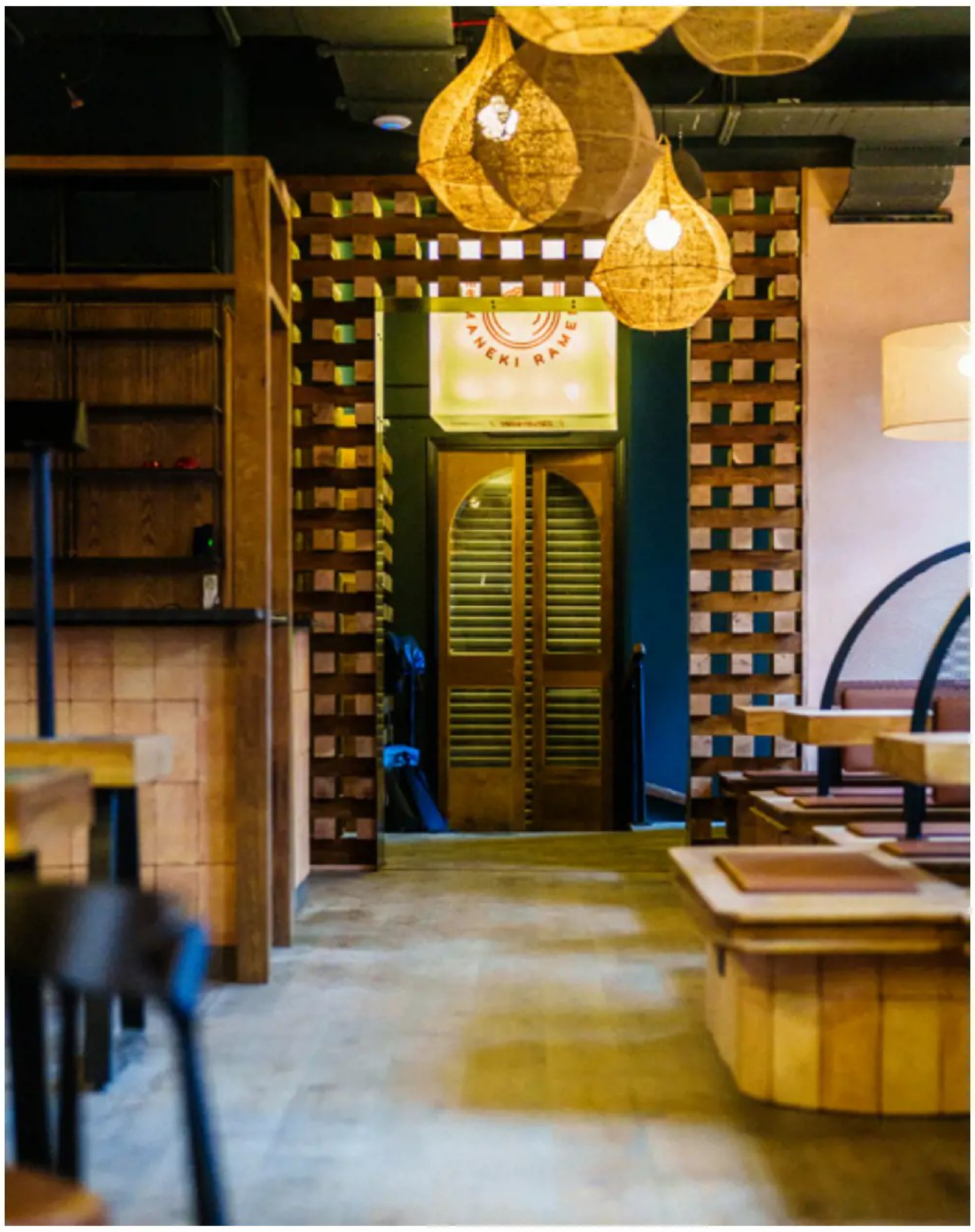
At Maneki, it's not just about great ramen—it's about doing things properly. "Everything we put on the menu is there because it earns its place," he says. "It's about care, consistency, and a commitment to getting it right. There's nowhere else quite like it in the area—the nearest similar restaurants are in Birmingham."

Seasonality isn't just a buzzword here—it's a guiding principle. "Food has to taste incredible, first and foremost," he insists. "Presentation matters, sure, but deliciousness comes first. And I love working with ingredients that are bang in season. There's a natural rhythm to that, and it always leads to better plates."

Autumn is a particular favourite. "Mushrooms, pumpkin, root veg—they all work beautifully with Japanese techniques. There's something really satisfying about cooking in that season."

When he's not in the kitchen, you'll find him exploring others—often several in one night. "I eat out a lot—usually once a week, sometimes



more. I lean towards Asian food and I'm a big fan of tasting menus. I love discovering new independents, especially ones serving natural wine."

As for mentors, he's quick to give credit. "Naoki Matsuzawa in Tokyo taught me so much, and Corin Earland back in Oxford had a huge influence on me. In the UK scene, I really respect Simon Rogan and Gordon Ramsay—for what they've built. And Marco Pierre White, of course—he's a legend."

Big things are on the horizon. Maneki is about to open its second site in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, buoyed by a community-funded campaign that raised £96,000. "That's unreal," he says. "One of the biggest moments in my life to date—bar my little girl!"

And after Birmingham? "I'd love to expand to Manchester—the food scene there is buzzing. Eventually, London. But we're taking it one step at a time."

So what advice does he offer to the next wave of chefs? "Read. Watch everything. Get your head down and learn from the people around you. Don't be afraid to mess up—it's how you grow. And just work hard, really hard. There's no shortcut for it."

PETE DOVASTON, MANEKI RAMEN

# QUICK-FIRE ROUND

**First industry job:**
McDonald's, age 16

**If not a chef:**
Professional golfer

**Most admired industry figure:**
Gordon Ramsay—for what he's built

**Pet hate in the kitchen:**
Messy workstations and poor hygiene

**Oddest customer comment:**
"I prefer a pot noodle"

**Cooking style in one sentence:**
Flavour-driven with simple, elegant presentation

**On the pass right now:**
Bottling our tonkatsu sauce

**Worst review moment:**
A customer thought the finger bowl was "bland lemony soup"

**Can't live without:**
My Japanese slicing knife

**Last meal:**
A full tasting menu

**Best meal ever:**
Simon Rogan's organic menu in west London

**Favourite fast food:**
Joshoken in Tokyo

**TV pick:**
Great British Menu

**Most overrated food:**
Lobster

**One thing I'd ban:**
Truffle oil

**Instagram or TikTok:**
Instagram

**Dream dinner guest:**
Marco Pierre White

**Earliest food memory:**
Fresh sourdough and cheese in France

**Tipple of choice:**
Natural wine

**Favourite pairing:**
Ramen and an ice-cold beer

**Signature dish:**
Miso Caramel Custard Tart—perfect balance of sweet, savoury, and texture C

**www.manekiramen.com**

# Spain, a land of taste

#SpainFoodNation

**June 25th, 2025**
**The View**
38-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A 3PE,
London, United Kingdom

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**12:00 - 17:00**
Exclusive trade and media walk-around and tasting

**A must-attend event for UK food and drink professionals to explore the incredible range of quality Spanish products on offer.**

Spanish food and drink businesses will showcase products to attendees at **Taste Spain London.**

Hosted by Foods and Wines from Spain and Alimentos de España, the event connects leading producers of quality Spanish food and drink with buyers from the retail, hospitality, and foodservic sectors, including importers, distributors, and independent specialists.

For more information and to register, please visit the **event page.**

## UK OVERTAKES US AS FIFTH-LARGEST NON-EU EXPORT DESTINATION FOR SPANISH FOOD AND DRINK

The value of exports of food and drink from Spain to the UK reached €5.1 billion in 2024, according to the Spanish government. The country has now overtaken the US to become the fifth largest export market for these products outside of the EU.

To mark the milestone, 21 Spanish food and drink businesses will showcase products to attendees at Taste Spain London 2025. Hosted by Foods and Wines from Spain and Alimentos de España at The View, London, the trade-only event connects leading producers of quality Spanish food and drink with buyers from the retail, hospitality, and foodservice sectors, including importers, distributors, and independent specialists.

Visitors will have the chance to explore delicious products including Ibérico, DOP Teruel, and other hams, a range of cheeses such as Manchego, olives and olive oils, gourmet condiments and spices, preserved vegetables, breads, sweet foods, and more. They will have the chance to meet the people behind these products, and discuss opportunities in the UK market, where the interest in Spanish gastronomy has boomed in the past decade, with the opening of new restaurants and growing sales of a wide range of produce from Spain.

“This is a must-attend event for UK food and drink professionals to explore the incredible range of quality Spanish products on offer,” said Fernando Muñoz, Director Food, Wine & Gastronomy Department at Embassy of Spain in London. “There is real momentum in the UK market, and Taste Spain London 2025 will allow buyers to connect with the producers who will help them bring new lines to customers and develop this business further still.”

Please scan the QR code for more information and to register.

FWS Foods and Wines from Spain

#alimentosdespaña

CLASSIC
FINE FOODS
BRIDOR
Share the
bakery cultures
of the world

FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, CLASSIC FINE FOODS HAS BEEN A PROUD PARTNER OF BRIDOR. BRINGING THEIR ACROSS-THE-BOARD VALUE LED RANGE OF BREADS, VIENNESE PASTRIES, SNACKS AND PREMIUM PASTRIES, ACKNOWLEDGED AROUND THE GLOBE FOR THEIR EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY AND TASTE, TO CHEFS IN THE UK.

As a leader in producing premium frozen bakery products, Bridor has been combining bakery know-how and industrial excellence for over 30 years now and offers high-quality products in over 100 countries.

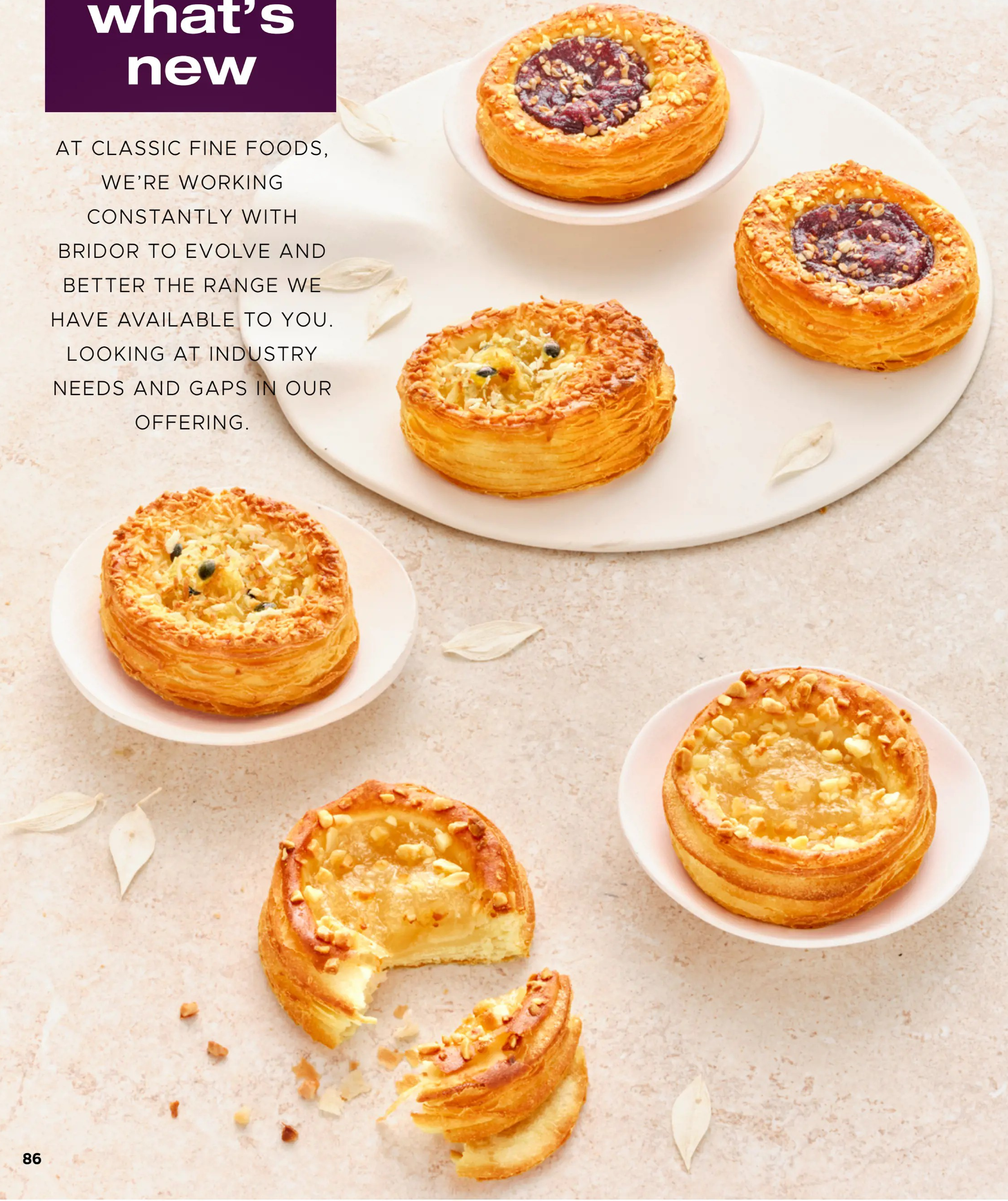
Bridor has always endeavoured to make premium bread and Viennese pastries available to everyone. Thanks to a simple yet highly demanding philosophy, combining industrial power and the mastery of craftsmanship, Bridor has successfully passed on the talent of great chefs to a wide audience.

With a focus on ensuring excellence in their ingredients and supply chains, Bridor use the purest possible recipes that are free from additives. Creating delicious, authentic and natural products for chefs striving for excellence.

Going beyond French-style bakery culture, Bridor embraces all the world's cultures. Its open-mindedness and curiosity have led it to nurture boundless creativity bursting with flavour. Innovation is at the heart of the company, imagining and developing new products every year.

# Discover what's new

AT CLASSIC FINE FOODS, WE'RE WORKING CONSTANTLY WITH BRIDOR TO EVOLVE AND BETTER THE RANGE WE HAVE AVAILABLE TO YOU. LOOKING AT INDUSTRY NEEDS AND GAPS IN OUR OFFERING.



Here are the five new products we've just brought in. Available now!

- Mini Blackcurrant & Apple Tarts – BRI42322
- Mini Pineapple & Passionfruit Tarts – BRI42323
- Chocolate Chip Bread Roll – BRI42665
- Gourmet Seeded Sourdough Baguette – BRI42332
- Khorasan Wheat Sourdough Bread Loaf by Frédéric Lalos – BRI42392

CLASSIC
FINE FOODS

**Scan the QR code to shop the Bridor range at Classic Fine Foods today!**

SCAN ME

# Leading chefs join Chutney Mary founders to celebrate 35 years

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY CAMELLIA AND NAMITA PANJABI, ALONG WITH RANJIT MATHRANI, CHUTNEY MARY INITIALLY OPENED ON KING'S ROAD IN CHELSEA, INTRODUCING AN ANGLO-INDIAN MENU THAT WAS UNPRECEDENTED IN UK RESTAURANTS.

The restaurant quickly gained a reputation for introducing sophisticated Indian cuisine to the city. In 2015, the restaurant relocated to its current address in St James, where it continues to set the standard for Indian gastronomy in the UK.

The restaurant is celebrated for its luxurious interior and contemporary Indian artwork. It offers a refined yet welcoming atmosphere that appeals to both locals and international visitors. Adjacent to the main dining area is the Pukka Bar, a stylish cocktail space serving innovative drinks infused with Indian spices and botanicals, such as saffron and cardamom.

Chutney Mary celebrates regional Indian cooking. The menu is a curated showcase of dishes from across the subcontinent, including delicacies from Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala, Hyderabad, and Goa. These regional offerings are prepared by chefs trained in their respective culinary traditions, ensuring authenticity and depth of flavour. Signature dishes like venison samosas and the carrot and cardamom soufflé with pistachio ice cream have become favourites among regular patrons.

Chutney Mary continues to be a leader in London's culinary scene, blending traditional Indian flavours with a modern approach to presentation and service. To recognise an incredible 35 years of business, the founders threw an exclusive private dining room event and welcomed chefs Raymond Blanc, Tom Aikens and Buckingham Palace Chef Marc Flanagan – plus leading food writers - to

join them and reminisce on what it takes to maintain longevity in such a changing and challenging sector.

The Chutney Mary team of chefs delivered an outstanding celebratory meal, showcasing some of the restaurants most iconic dishes from over the years, while conversation flowed and stories were shared. On two occasions Chutney Mary has been involved in banqueting at the Palace, and Palace chef, Marc Flanagan described the hugely positive response from the late Queen Elizabeth II. Raymond Blanc entertained all with recollections of his early days arriving in the UK – and why he was 'exiled to Great Britain' by his former chef in France, and Tom Aikens spoke of his extreme fondness for the Panjabi sisters and recognised the impact they have had on the culinary scene in the UK.

Image Alix McIntosh

# "We're keeping things classic – well-made, seasonal dishes that are created to be full of flavour"

## Scott Smith

The CAPT. DARLING
COMING SOON
E ARE RECRUITING
ÒIR GROUP

THE EDINBURGH NEIGHBOURHOOD OF STOCKBRIDGE WELCOMED A BUSTLING NEW PUB AND RESTAURANT TO HAMILTON PLACE AT THE END OF MAY.

'The Captain Darling' opened its doors to everyone in search of a relaxed and comfortable space to enjoy time together with friends, family and their four-legged companions.

As part of its plans to open seven days a week from lunchtime until late, the team behind The Captain Darling has created a classic pub venue with dedicated bar space for people to drop in for a leisurely drink throughout the day. A bar and table service will offer a range of beers, world wines, speciality spirits and cocktails.

A separate dining area has an all-day modern pub style menu, serving everything from classic dishes to a selection of meats cooked over coals and a speciality Sunday roast with all the trimmings.

Edinburgh chef, Scott Smith, teamed up with the city's Òir Group to launch of The Captain Darling and to oversee the kitchen. The former chef patron of Edinburgh's multi-award-winning restaurant, Fhior, has just started a new chapter in his culinary career, providing hospitality businesses like The Captain Darling with bespoke catering solutions.

Commenting on the launch plans for The Captain Darling, Scott Smith said:

"The food's an important part of The Captain Darling, but it's not about being a 'gastro pub.' We're keeping things classic – well-made, seasonal dishes that are created to be full of flavour. A key feature will be our grill section, with a rotating selection of meats cooked over coals – proper pub cooking with a bit of flair. Our Sunday roast, with porchetta front and centre, is something we hope becomes a bit of a local tradition."

The Òir Group is an independent hospitality company that have operated restaurants like Bodega & Lucky Yu within the city for over a decade, with The Captain Darling being the first in a series of openings lined up over the next nine months for the group.

John Howard, owner and director of The Òir Group, said:

"With The Captain Darling, we want to create a proper pub in the heart of Stockbridge – somewhere that feels part of the neighbourhood from day one. It's going to be a place people can rely on, whether they're dropping in for a quick pint, catching up with friends, or sitting down for a good meal" C

# Too Many Critics take on Roe

THE TOO MANY CRITICS CHARITY EVENT - ESTABLISHED BY BILL KNOTT AND THE LATE CHARLES CAMPION IN SUPPORT OF ACTION AGAINST HUNGER – IS BACK FOR 2025 AT ROE IN CANARY WHARF.

The 2025 line-up includes food critics Tom Parker Bowles (Mail on Sunday), Leonie Cooper (Time Out), David Ellis (The London Standard), Molly Codyre (Foodism), Kate Krader (Bloomberg), Hannah Twiggs (Independent) and Adam Hyman (CODE and The Good Food Guide) as they move away from their desks and into the kitchen for one night only, to cook a 4-course dinner for a room full of guests and a host of chefs-turned-judges, to raise funds and awareness for Action Against Hunger.

Chefs including Ashley Palmer-Watts and Shaun Searley take on the role of critic during the event, which is now in its eighteenth year. This year's event will take place at Roe in Canary Wharf - the latest restaurant from Will Murray, Jack Croft and James Robson, the trio behind Fallow St. James's and FOWL. Critics will be tasked with cooking signature dishes from both Roe and Fallow St. James's, championing modest and underused British ingredients and showcasing the restaurants' zero-waste philosophy.

The event will also feature a silent auction which goes live on Monday 2nd June, offering exclusive prizes such as private dining experiences, wine tours and luxury stays. Highlights of the silent auction include dinners for two at the following acclaimed restaurants; 3 Michelin-starred Moor Hall Restaurant with Rooms from Mark Birchall; Wildflowers restaurant in Belgravia, Hackney hotspot Sesta; and The Palmerston and Leftfield in Edinburgh. A live auction also takes place during the evening, offering guests the opportunity to bid for highly sought after prizes, including dinner for 4 cooked at home by Chef Joe Laker of Counter 71, paired with a whiskey flight by Ryan Sheehan from their sister bar, Lowcountry.

Last year's event raised over £145,000 for Action Against Hunger, supporting their work providing life-saving treatment and care to millions of people suffering from life-threatening hunger in over 50 countries, with this year's edition aiming to do the same. Funds raised at this year's Too Many Critics event will help Action Against Hunger continue its vital work tackling life-threatening hunger, both in the UK and around the world. The charity supports more than 28 million people across over 50 countries every year, delivering lifesaving nutrition, clean water, and mental health support to families facing crisis. In the UK, Action Against Hunger works with local partners to address the root causes of hunger, supporting community-led food and wellbeing hubs, school food initiatives, and research to shape long-term solutions. Internationally, the charity responds to emergencies, trains health workers to spot and treat malnutrition early, and works with governments to improve health systems and food security. Every ticket purchased, and every auction prize bid on, helps to fund this essential work, making sure more children survive, grow up strong, and build futures free from hunger.

UNOX
UNOX
CHEFTOP X

# UNOX UK ANNOUNCED AS THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS ASSOCIATE MEMBER IN KEY MULTI-YEAR DEAL

UNOX UK, A LEADING SUPPLIER OF COOKING SOLUTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL KITCHENS, HAS SIGNED A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS (RACA) WHICH WILL SEE THE COMPANY BECOME THE HEADLINE EQUIPMENT PARTNER FOR THE MASTER OF CULINARY ARTS (MCA) IN 2026, AS WELL AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER.

Having attracted interest from some of the industry's most respected chefs, kitchens and restaurants in recent years, this announcement helps to reinforce Unox UK's status in the fine dining sector. With the MCA being seen as the most prestigious accolade in UK hospitality and occurring only every four years, Unox UK's position as Headline Equipment Partner demonstrates the level of commitment the brand places on preserving many of the classical cooking and service skills. Obtained by just a handful of chefs and restaurant managers over the past 38 years, the competition is famed for demanding perfection and candidates being assessed by an esteemed panel of judges. As part of the sponsorship, Unox and RACA will jointly host a series of themed masterclasses, including:

Mastering the classics with Unox CHEFTOP-X™
Mastering pastry with Unox BAKERTOP-X™
Mastering the miraculous with Unox EVEREO™

On this announcement, Scott Duncan, Managing Director at Unox UK comments:

"We could not be prouder to be announced as a partner of The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts. The Academy represents individuals of the very highest standard, preserves skills and techniques for future generations and nurtures and mentors tomorrow's top chefs, pastry chefs and restaurant managers, so to be a part of this journey is a real honour for us.

As an equipment manufacturer and supplier, Unox works with chefs and front of house teams across the country and around the world. Innovating and advancing technology in a professional kitchen, Unox understands what it takes to perform at the highest level and with ultimate precision. Those striving to achieve the Master of Culinary Arts in 2026 must deliver excellence at every stage, and by partnering with RACA, we look forward to helping and supporting those individuals on their journey."

In addition to the MCA 2026, Unox has also become the Equipment sponsor at a special fundraising banquet later this year, has been announced as a RACA Associate Member and will work in conjunction with the Academy to support its College Community Programme.

Acknowledging the importance of supplier partnerships when it comes to recognising talent and mentoring the leaders of the future, Lisa Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer at The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts adds:

"We're delighted to be able to confirm Unox UK as our Headline Equipment Partner for the MCA, our Equipment Sponsor at our fundraising banquet later in the year, an Associate Member and a partner for our College Community Programme.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely on the support of our partners, and to have confirmed a brand like Unox UK is wonderful. Using state of the art technology and understanding the needs of chefs, pastry chefs and restaurant managers in a unique way, Unox has shown a commitment to not only supporting those running kitchens and managing restaurants today, but also the next generation of leaders too."

With entry for the MCA due to open later this year, the next cohort of potential achievers are already preparing for one of the toughest, but most highly recognised accolades in the industry. To find out more about the Master of Culinary Arts, the College Community Fund or the work done by The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts across our industry, please visit **www.royalacademyofculinaryarts.org.uk.**

For more information on the equipment range from Unox, please visit **www.unox.com** or call +44 (0)1252 851 522.

# WHY PURPOSE-DRIVEN HOSPITALITY ATTRACTS THE BEST PEOPLE

"IF YOU CARE ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY, YOUR BEST PEOPLE WILL STAY."

That sentiment echoed loud and clear at our last Midlands Hospitality Network session. When there's a purpose behind your business, people feel it. Guests notice it. Teams thrive in it. And the culture? It transforms.

Purpose *is* powerful. It speaks to something deep inside us and makes us feel we are working for something greater than profits. It creates identity. It builds an emotional connection. It's one of the most effective ways to attract and retain talent in hospitality.

Although we have started this piece looking at purpose through the lens of sustainability, more broadly, purpose can mean many things: creating opportunities for young people, supporting local producers, designing a genuinely inclusive workplace, or simply choosing to do business in a way that leaves things better than you found them.

And that kind of thinking is becoming one of the biggest drivers in hospitality recruitment.

The post-pandemic talent crisis forced our industry to rethink not just how we work, but why we work. Flexibility, fair pay, and better work-life balance all entered the spotlight, but alongside those practical needs came a deeper question: what's the point?

For Gen Z in particular, this question isn't optional. Purpose isn't a buzzword for them. It's a dealbreaker. They're not just looking for a job. They want to work for businesses that reflect their values. Somewhere they can feel proud of. Somewhere with a sense of meaning.

And this is backed up by research. A recent study by Nutritics and CGA by NIQ found that 76% of hospitality workers, and 88% of those in management roles, are more likely to stay with an employer that's positively impacting the environment. While that study focused on environmental sustainability, the implications are broader. When people believe in the purpose of a business, whether it's social, ethical or environmental, they engage more deeply. They go the extra mile. They stick around.

A 2023 Harvard Business Review article, *A Strong Purpose Can Make Your Company a Magnet for Talent*, highlighted how businesses with clearly defined values and meaningful missions are outperforming their competitors in recruitment and retention. Purpose builds loyalty. Not just from guests, but from staff.

Why? Because purpose creates alignment. It gives people a reason to care.

Hospitality is bloody hard graft. Long hours, late nights, and high-pressure environments are par for the course. So why do people stay? Increasingly, the answer lies in purpose. When people feel like their work means something, when they know their actions contribute to something good, they're more resilient. More committed. More fulfilled.

We see this in businesses that prioritise mental health. Venues that give back to their communities. Restaurants that pay above the living wage, source from ethical suppliers, or support team members through training and development. These aren't just policies. They're proof of purpose, and people notice.

The energy is different in a purpose-driven workplace. There's a shared sense of pride. A collective commitment to doing things well. And that filters through to the guest experience too. Customers feel the difference. They come for the food or the rooms, yes, but they stay for the story, the values, the vibe.

That's the real power of purpose. It's not a gimmick. It's not a passing trend. It's the future of great hospitality.

Purpose can be embedded in countless ways. From the language in your job ads to the experience of onboarding. From the way you talk about your suppliers to how you treat your team during tough shifts. It's not always about shouting the loudest. It's about being consistent and authentic.

Take independent businesses that invest in their communities. Hosting school visits to teach children about food. Offering cooking classes to those with barriers to employment. Or large hospitality groups that publicly commit to reducing food waste, provide mental health first aid training, or create spaces for underrepresented voices to thrive. These actions say, "We care." And that message travels far.

Gen Z, in particular, is a generation raised on transparency and digital storytelling. They're quick to research, to scrutinise (quite rightly), and to share. They know when a message is performative and when it's real. If your purpose is aligned with action, they'll find it. And if it's not? They'll notice that too.

It's worth considering that purpose also supports your employer brand in the long term. Recruitment is no longer just about filling vacancies. It's about building a reputation that makes people want to work for you. When your purpose is clear and consistently communicated, it becomes part of your identity. It's a differentiator in a crowded market.

And crucially, purpose helps you weather the tough times. Hospitality is unpredictable. External shocks, seasonal fluctuations, and staffing challenges will always exist. But a shared sense of purpose keeps people anchored. It offers clarity. It becomes a source of strength when the pressure is on.

At Tonic Talent, our purpose has always gone beyond simply being "people finders." Yes, we help hospitality businesses recruit exceptional talent. But just as importantly, we support the industry as a whole. Whether it's championing causes like Hospitality Action and Walk for Wellbeing, raising funds for Birmingham Women and Children's Hospital, or providing opportunities for connection and support through the not-for-profit Midlands Hospitality Network (MHN), our goal is to leave the sector stronger than we found it.

We also work closely with local charity SIFA Fireside. We recently joined forces to cook and serve Christmas lunch to their clients – an experience that reminded us how powerful hospitality can be in creating joy and connection. Supporting the next generation is just as important to us, so we work year-round with University College Birmingham (UCB). We help students prepare for life after education by offering real-world interview coaching, career advice, and industry insight.

MHN was created to give hospitality professionals the tools they need to thrive at work, to connect with peers, and to share honest, solution-driven conversations about the challenges we face. Crucially, it's a supplier-free environment. Attendees are protected from sales pitches and can focus on learning, laughing, and lifting each other. That's what purpose looks like in action.

So if you're struggling to recruit, if your team morale is low, or if you're watching great people walk out the door, ask yourself:

What do we stand for? What are we proud of? And how are we showing that to the world?

Because when you lead with purpose, you don't just attract talent. You build a team that believes in your journey. And that's when the real magic happens. C

TONIC
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CHEF STUDY TOUR

# RUNGIS MARKET

## PARIS

A LA MAREE
FRUITS DE MER
POISSONS
A LA MAREE
A la

### The Chefs:

**JAMES KNAPPETT, Chef Patron,** Kitchen Table

**AMIQUR ANSARI, Banqueting Head Chef,** Raffles Hotel

**ANDREW KIRKWOOD, Senior Sous,** Woven at Coworth Park

**SHAKIL AHMED, Senior Purchasing** Manager, The Dorchester

**FREDDY WILSON, Head Chef,** The Grill at The Dorchester

**JACK TAYLOR, Sous Chef,** The Grill at The Dorchester

**PAUL SOCZOWKA, Executive Chef,** Pavyllon at Four Seasons Park Lane

**KEN TYRRELL, Executive Chef,** Buurger & Lobster

**LUKASZ CHRYN, Operations Head Chef,** Burger & Lobster

**OLIVIER RUIZ, Executive Chef, Park Plaza,** Westminster

**BRENDAN FYLDE, Group Executive Chef,** The Beaumont

### The Visit:

Rungis Market, located just south of Paris, is the largest wholesale food market in the world. Covering more than 230 hectares (approximately 570 acres), it serves as the beating heart of France's food distribution network, supplying Paris and much of Europe with fresh produce, meat, seafood, dairy, and flowers. Officially known as Marché International de Rungis, it replaced the historic Les Halles market in central Paris in 1969, moving operations to a more accessible location near Orly Airport and major motorways.

Rungis is a vast, meticulously organised complex made up of specialised halls dedicated to different categories of goods. Every night and early morning, it comes alive with thousands of traders, chefs, wholesalers, and buyers navigating its alleys. Around 1,200 companies operate within the market, employing over 12,000 people. The logistics of Rungis are highly efficient. Products arrive and are dispatched quickly to maintain freshness, especially critical for perishable items like seafood and seasonal fruits.

Rungis market is known not only for its size but also for the exceptional quality of its goods. Many of Europe's top restaurants source ingredients from Rungis. It is considered a symbol of French culinary excellence and a vital institution in the country's gastronomy.

Although Valimex partner with leading growers and producers within the UK, they also have a representative out in Rungis market and offer their chef customers access to the finest European grown produce. Produce is inspected daily at around 2.30am as the fresh halls fill up and then purchased according to Valimex's customer requirements. No box of produce leaves for the UK without having been fully checked for both quality and freshness.

Helping chefs connect with how Rungis market and Valimex operate, a team of chefs were invited to join Dan Whitmore, Tom Richards and Michael Thorpe on a hosted visit to the market, so they could experience first-hand, the energy, the dynamics and the pace of the whole operation.

With a morning that began at 3am, the team of chefs arrived in Paris the evening before, and we headed to À la Marée - a celebrated restaurant located within the sprawling market. Established in 1972, it has become a key destination for chefs, food lovers, and market professionals who gather to enjoy top-quality food in an authentic setting that reflects the spirit of Rungis itself.

Situated on the market, À la Marée celebrates the exceptional freshness of its seafood, sourced directly from the nearby fish halls. There are generous seafood platters stacked with oysters, langoustines, clams, and lobster; grilled whole fish; razor clams in garlic butter – to name just a few. Though seafood is the main attraction, the restaurant also offers a variety of meat and poultry dishes, ensuring there's something for every palate.

Open around the clock from Monday morning to Saturday, À la Marée accommodates the unusual hours of market life. Its doors are open to early risers finishing a shift as well as night owls in search of a late meal. A shuttle service is available to and from nearby hotels, making access convenient for visitors unfamiliar with Rungis.

Rungis Market hosts around 15 to 20 restaurants, cafés, and food counters within its vast complex. These establishments primarily

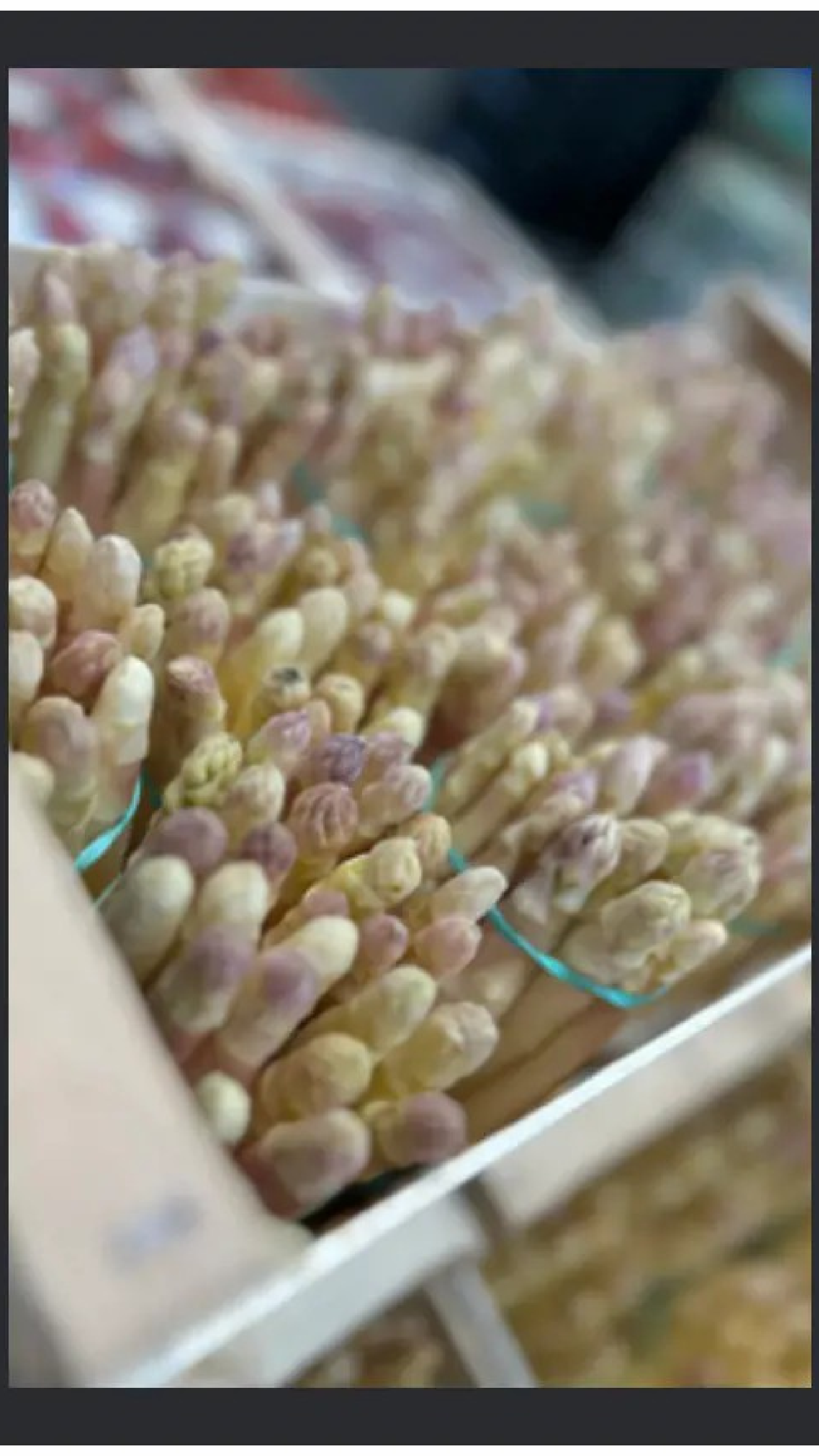
VISITE
RUNGIS
MARCHÉ INTERNATIONAL

PARENTHÈSE
ASPERGE FRANÇAISE

serve the thousands of workers, traders, and early-morning visitors who populate the market during its busiest hours.

Approximately 12,000 people work at Rungis International Market. This workforce includes a wide range of roles such as wholesalers, logistics and transport personnel, butchers, fishmongers, florists, administrative staff, and support services.

The market is home to over 1,200 companies, and it operates like a small city - complete with its own security, waste management, policing, medical, restaurants, and transportation network. Its scale and complexity make it one of the largest employment hubs in the Paris region.



OIGNONS BOTTE X 12
Oignons
Origine: FRANCE

VISITE
RUNGIS
MARCHÉ INTERNATIONAL
VIP

The Fish Hall at Rungis International Market typically opens around midnight and operates until approximately 6am, or until the day's stock is sold. As the first section to commence trading each night, it sets the pace for the market's bustling activity and was our first port of call. By early morning, much of the seafood has been purchased and dispatched to restaurants and retailers across France and Europe.

Following on from fish and seafood, we then visited the meat, triperie and butchers' halls. From Poulet de Bresse, to calves' brains to the enormous carcass of a Charolais, everything was on display for the chefs to see, with the representatives of each section happy to share knowledge and information. We then headed to the dairy hall, home to thousands of French and International cheese, butter, yoghurt and creams.

The star of the show had to be the fresh produce halls. There are 9 dedicated sales pavilions for fruits and vegetables plus 'A carreau des producteurs' - a specialised area where local Île-de-France producers turn up and sell directly.

With soft fruits now full in season, the halls were awash with berries, apricots, peaches and cherries. There were melons of many different varieties, Menton lemons, tropical and stone fruits, plus apples and pears of all varieties – some unknown to the visiting chefs.

White, green and wild asparagus were plentiful. Garlics, baby potatoes, jersey royals, peas, beans and aubergines – all exceptional quality and in perfect condition.

Sustainability is a driving force in modern restaurants, and the chefs were pleased to learn about the markets constant investment in waste management, green energy, and efficient refrigeration systems. The market recycles all organic waste, generates biogas, and is continually modernising to reduce its environmental impact.

While not open to the public, Rungis allows guided visits to Valimex, and these offer a rare glimpse into the immense scale and intricate coordination that keeps French - and many European kitchens – supplied with produce. More than a market, Rungis is a monument to food culture, logistics, and craftsmanship on an industrial scale.

Employing a permanent professional at Rungis market means that Valimex customers can access the finest European produce on offer in quick time. With all produce scrutinised for quality and freshness at the beginning of each day, chefs can be reassured the produce will arrive in their kitchens in perfect condition. Coupled with their growing portfolio of UK partner producers, which are also highly scrutinised for quality, the Valimex team understand the importance of getting their chef customers the highest quality produce at all times. C

# WHAT THE HECK IS EMBODIED CARBON?

## AND WHY YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT....

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN YOUR KITCHEN IS PROBABLY SOMETHING YOU'VE EITHER BEEN THINKING OF, OR ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO. BEYOND THE BENEFITS OF KNOWING THAT YOU'RE PLAYING A SMALL PART IN REDUCING THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE THERE ARE MANY WAYS IN WHICH THESE ACTIONS CAN SAVE YOU MONEY, MAKING A DIRECT IMPACT TO THE ONGOING SUCCESS OF YOUR BUSINESS.

As a chef, you're probably already familiar with how these issues affect your job. For example, sourcing ingredients from local producers has the environmental benefit of reducing food miles. It also allows you to easily verify the quality of the food and how it's produced. Less immediate factors such as how crops are fertilised and how they are farmed all contribute to the environmental impact of the food, and the increasing popularity of organically grown produce demonstrates that many businesses understand the positive effects this can have on their business.

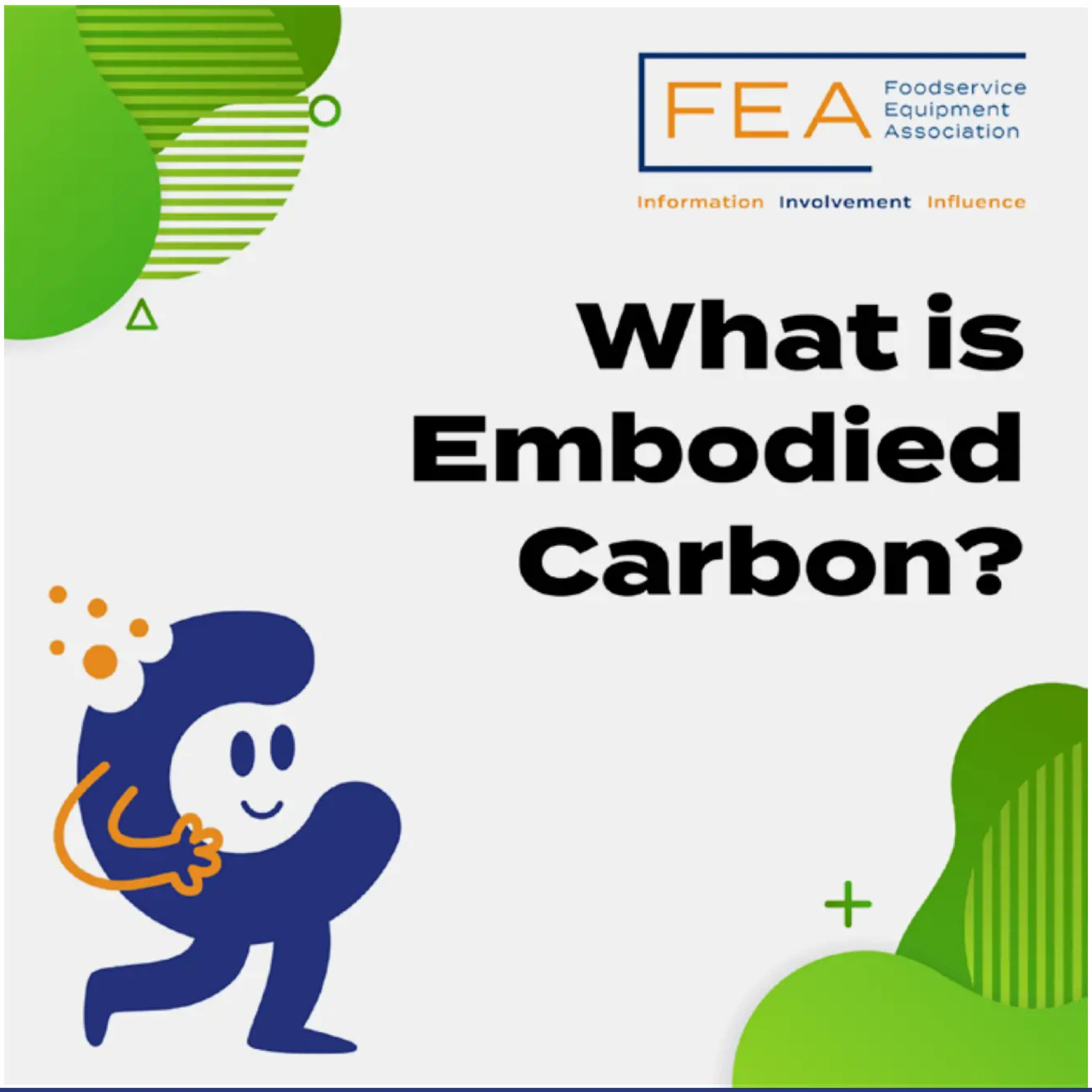
Similarly, energy efficiency is an increasingly important factor driving the decisions of kitchen equipment. Beyond the simple reduction in energy usage more equipment nowadays includes features such as advanced control systems and remote data monitoring capabilities that allow for further improvements. These include full process automation, as well as identifying ways to improve how staff are using the equipment and keeping on top of issues requiring maintenance, ensuring that it is operating at peak efficiency as much as possible.

But there are other factors that need to be considered when choosing equipment to guarantee that you are using the most sustainable systems in your kitchen. Recently you may have heard discussion of the issue of Embodied Carbon and what it means. While it won't affect your day to day working life, if you have responsibility for choosing your equipment having a working knowledge of what it means will empower you to make better decisions.

We're all aware of the basics of climate change at this point: Emissions of carbon dioxide are heating up the atmosphere and will cause significant damage to the planet and our society if left unchecked. Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels and transitioning to sustainable energy sources has been one of the main priorities of governments and organisations around the world, as it is historically the largest single driver of climate change. But our reliance on fossil fuel goes well beyond simple energy generation. It is vital in the creation of plastics, metal and electronic components whether during the manufacturing process or the extraction of raw materials.

Furthermore, just as you might take into account the miles your ingredients travel when making purchasing decisions, the emissions generated by moving, processing and constructing materials and equipment from, say, the mine to the foundry to the factory to the distributor and finally your kitchen need to be considered as much as the energy they consume when in use. And, at the end of your equipment's life cycle, there are further carbon costs associated with disposing of it, including recovering, reusing or recycling any of its constituent parts.

This, essentially, is what we mean when we talk about embodied carbon. Finding ways to limit these emissions is a key part of the government's Net Zero ambitions, and a key part of this will involve recording and quantifying data in such a way as to help you make more informed decisions about the equipment you are buying.


FEA
Foodservice Equipment Association
Information Involvement Influence
What is Embodied Carbon?

The next time you buy new equipment for the kitchen you may well find yourself being presented with an Environmental Product Declaration, which is a document that quantifies the overall environmental impact of a product throughout its life cycle. This will allow you to fully evaluate the performance of different products on a level playing field.

This is going to become more important as more organisations become required to report on their Scope 3 carbon emissions. These are emissions that a business is indirectly responsible for, such as those incurred through buying, using and disposing of products. These are quite different to Scope 1 and 2 emissions, which respectively refer to emissions from sources that you own directly – such as from fuel burnt by company vehicles – and emissions caused indirectly, in particular those which come from the generation of electricity your company uses.

Gathering the data relating to Scope 3 emissions needs to be a collaborative process between many different businesses, and the quality of this information will improve over time as more companies begin collating data from their supply chains both up and downstream. New construction, and now refits, are increasingly requesting embodied carbon data for the materials and products, as they have to provide this data as part of their tendering requirements. It is a good idea to start asking your suppliers for the information now as this can be a time consuming process. This will not only help you to make better decisions about the equipment you need, but will also encourage suppliers, dealers and manufacturers to get ahead of the curve and begin providing this important information.

As you can see, it's a complex subject, and while it might seem like an unnecessary bureaucratic burden it has the potential to find new ways for you to create a more sustainable, efficient and cost effective business. To help educate the industry on issue of embodied carbon FEA has created the Embodied Carbon Hub, which contains simple to understand guides which explain the kind of information you can expect to see when choosing new equipment in the future, and how to use it to ensure you're making the best choices for your business.

FEA's embodied carbon hub can be found on their website here **https://www.fea.org.uk/information/embodied-carbon/**

# UMBRELLA TRAINING

# New Reform

## Give Kitchens a Boost in Nurturing Young Culinary Talent

THERE HAS BEEN A POSITIVE SHIFT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THIS YEAR, AIMED AT REMOVING ACADEMIC BARRIERS FOR LEARNERS, WHICH IS BEING WELCOMED BY LEADING HOSPITALITY APPRENTICESHIP PROVIDER UMBRELLA TRAINING.

The update to its funding rules has removed mandatory Functional Skills qualifications in English and maths for some apprentices - particularly those with learning difficulties or educational health and care plans (EHCPs). For many kitchen learners, especially those with strong practical skills without an academic focussed background, this can be the difference between staying on a programme or dropping out. Whilst 16-18 year olds are still required to complete Functional Skills if they don't have the equivalent GCSE in English and Maths, this change aims to put the focus back on practical skill sets for the over 18's, whilst Functional Skills remains optional if the employer or apprentice would like to have it as a part of their programme.

*"We've worked with incredibly talented young chefs who have thrived in a kitchen environment but really struggled with the academic Functional Skills requirements of an apprenticeship. This change gives us the flexibility to allow for choices that fit each apprentice and employer individually – we want to support each apprentice throughout the process, whether that's if they want to include Functional Skills or if they choose not to. This better supports each learner on their individual path, and helps more apprentices focus on what matters: building their skills and confidence in the kitchen."*

The hospitality industry is well known for its high-pressure nature, long hours and steep learning curve. For young entrants to the industry, apprenticeships can offer a structured and supported route into the trade, but only if the systems in place are fit for purpose. Umbrella Training's culinary programmes combine technical training with coaching and wellbeing support, helping learners build both competence and resilience.

Oxberry believes these changes come at a critical moment for the sector:

*"The demand for skilled chefs continues to rise, but many kitchens are still feeling the after-effects of COVID and Brexit on recruitment too, so these reforms support a more people-first, pragmatic approach to building talent from the ground up. Functional skills could be a real block to achievement for apprentices, despite passing the entire practical elements, learners could not progress to the end point assessments until they had passed them. Since this has been removed, we have already experienced a 94% increase in learners now passing their apprenticeship in a more timely way without the additional barrier."*

Alongside this, many employers are still unaware of a long-standing financial incentive that could further encourage investment in young talent. Since **2016**, UK employers have been exempt from paying **Class 1 National Insurance contributions** on the earnings of eligible apprentices under **25 years old**, provided they are on an approved apprenticeship standard and earn less than **£967 per week**. While commonly recognised for under-21s, this extended threshold for apprentices up to age 25 is often overlooked - despite offering a valuable opportunity to reduce employment costs in the kitchen. While the savings per person may appear modest, for kitchens on tight budgets and seeking to grow their own talent, every financial nudge matters. Umbrella Training, which partners with notable restaurants and hotels across the UK, knows firsthand how this can help reduce the cost of investing in young, entry-level chefs. According to Umbrella Training's latest data, 38% of its apprentices in the 2023/24 academic year were under 25, highlighting the importance of supporting the new young talent entering the industry:

*"For hospitality employers, every cost-saving matters. Utilising the National Insurance flexibilities makes it that little bit easier for employers to invest in young people who are just starting out. It sends the message that early careers matter, and that's something we strongly support."* comments Adele Oxberry, Founder of Umbrella Training.

For restaurant operators and head chefs looking to develop in-house talent, the changes offer more than just a cost saving, but allows employers to also look at upskilling their team members with higher level apprenticeships. It marks how government policy supports vocational learning in real-world environments, and while the long-term impact of this change is yet to be seen, Umbrella Training is optimistic. It continues to work closely with employers to ensure programmes reflect the pace, pressure and progression paths typical of modern culinary careers.

*"Hospitality is a fast-paced and demanding world, and the kitchen is often its toughest arena. But it's also where some of the most exciting careers are forged. This update won't solve every challenge, but they give us a stronger foundation to help apprentices succeed and stay in the industry."* C

For more information on culinary apprenticeships with Umbrella Training, visit **www.umbrellatraining.co.uk**

## COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY NAME OF THE GAME IN

# HIGHLY-COMPETITIVE TOQUE D’OR® 2025 GRAND FINALS WEEK

THE 2025 NESTLÉ PROFESSIONAL® TOQUE D’OR FINALISTS CHAMPIONED SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN A DYNAMIC, ACTION-PACKED WEEK OF REAL-LIFE CHALLENGES JUDGED BY INDUSTRY LEADERS INCLUDING AWARD-WINNING CHEF ADAM HANDLING MBE AND HIS FRONT OF HOUSE (FOH) DIRECTOR GEORGE HERSEY.

From mastering the art of pizza making and wine production and learning how to create and cost seasonal pub menus, to crafting cocktails, serving a wholesome lunch to more than 100 NHS staff, and delivering a faultless three-course fine dining meal for the judges.

WIN A CULINARY ADVENTURE IN ITALY
Nestlé Profession

## GRAND FINALS WEEK

The week started with a trip to Nestlé's partner farm in Suffolk, EJ Barker & Sons, where finalists explored regenerative agriculture with Nestlé's community regeneration lead, Robin Sundaram. The group then headed to the neighbouring, picturesque Wyken Vineyards for a tantalising challenge. Back of House (BOH) competitors learned how to create hand-stretched pizza with Pizza Pilgrims, while FOH finalists took a tour of the vineyard to hear all about the wine making process. Each competitor put their learnings to the test by serving an irresistible lunch pairing of pizza and wine to community guests.

A key highlight of the week was a bespoke NHS culinary challenge held at London's St Bartholomew's Hospital, where finalists served a grab-and-go style lunch to more than 100 frontline staff. BOH competitors prepared a delicious soup with freshly-baked bread and FOH finalists paired the food with a drink of their choice. A talk, led by Mel Crawford, associate director of Patient Catering & Food Service at Barts Health Trust, showcased the vital role food and drink plays in contributing to patient and staff wellbeing, as well as the breadth of roles available in NHS catering.

The next day a pub menu challenge with Greene King saw BOH finalists create and cost a seasonal starter, main and dessert for a mock Chef & Brewer Autumn/Winter menu. This was followed by taste tests on curries and brownies designed to test the chefs' palates, creativity and know-how. The six FOH competitors visited The Alchemist in London for a cocktail and mocktail masterclass, tapping into the latest mixology trends. Both groups heard from Only A Pavement Away, a charity which supports people who struggle to find work by finding them jobs within hospitality, such as those facing homelessness, prison leavers and veterans.

## THE FINE DINING CHALLENGE

The week culminated with a private dinner at Adam Handling's Michelin-starred Frog in Covent Garden and the prestigious Fine Dining Challenge, which took place at CORD by Le Cordon Bleu. Paired into six teams of two, the finalists created and served a three-course sustainable menu with matching English wines to the judges.

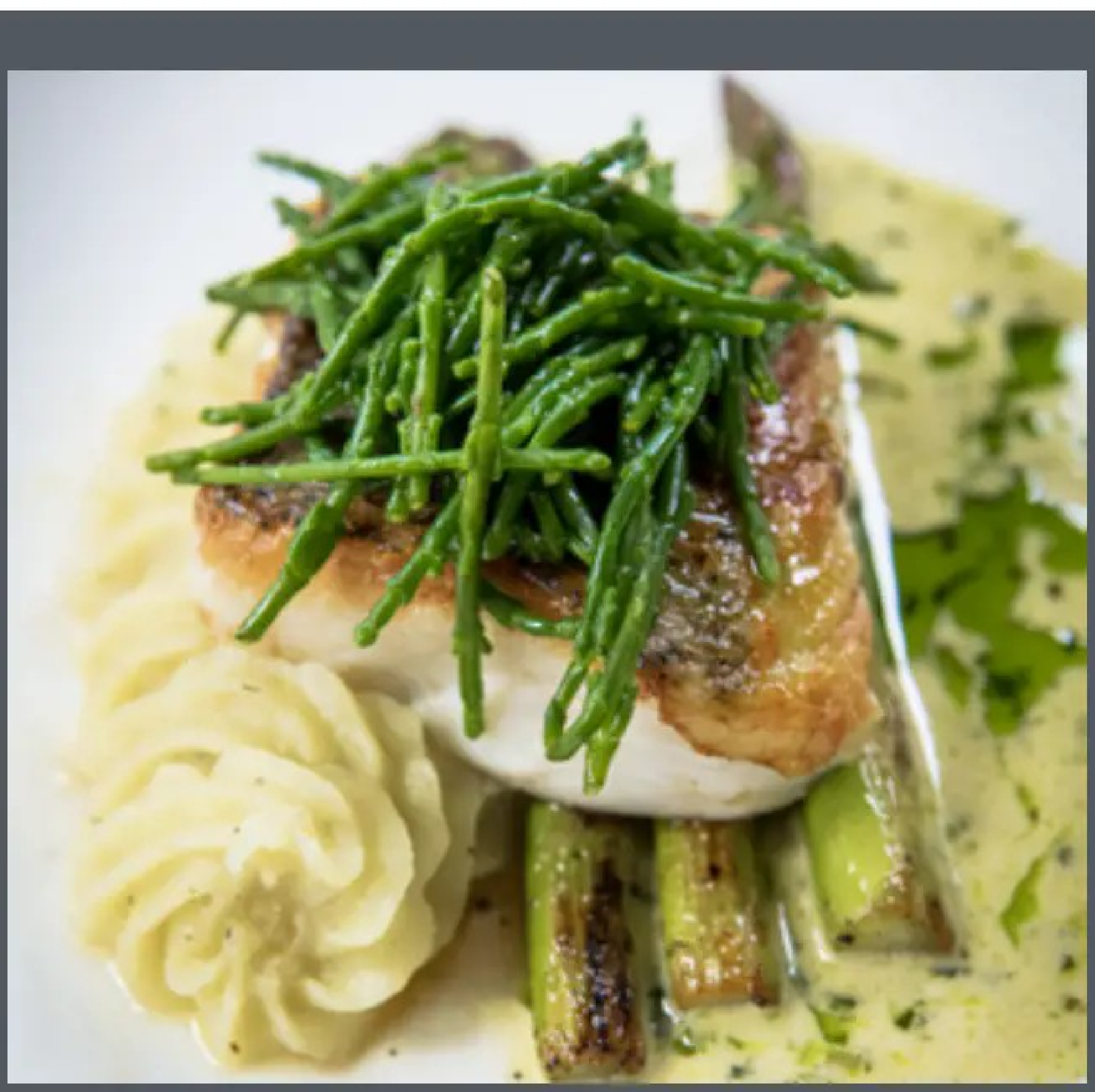
Adam Handling said: *"It was such a privilege to be part of Toque d'Or this year. The energy, the drive, and the commitment these young people showed was seriously impressive. Competitions like this are where careers are made and I have no doubt we'll be seeing many of them doing amazing things in the years to come."*

George Hersey added: *"Watching the students grow over the course of this competition has been inspiring. From their attention to detail and overall knowledge to their enthusiasm and execution, they've all blown me away with their performance. They really embraced the challenges and showed that hospitality can make a real difference to communities, to sustainability, and to people's lives. This competition is proof of just how powerful hospitality is and I hope the finalists can all use this experience to inspire others."*

The winners of this year's competition will be announced on Friday 6 June, before embarking on an extraordinary culinary trip to Italy in July. Here, they will have the unique opportunity to explore Italian cuisine, taste regional specialities and immerse themselves in the country's renowned gastronomy and culinary traditions.

## NEW FOR 2025: THE GREEN SPATULA AWARD

**In addition to the traditional winners of the competition, this year marks the introduction of the Nestlé Professional Green Spatula award.** Set up by the foodservice team at Nestlé, in partnership with The World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs), the accolade reflects the industry's joint-commitment to reducing environmental impact through the application of good practices such as waste reduction and thoughtful culinary practice. After making its debut at the 2024 Global Chefs Challenge in Singapore, Nestlé Professional will honour one BOH and one FOH finalist with a Green Spatula award for showcasing exceptional levels of commitment to sustainability throughout Grand Finals Week.



CLICK **HERE** FOR THE LATEST TOQUE D'OR COMPETITION UPDATES.

Capital
City College

VINCENT
ROOMS
LONDON
Westminster
Capital City College

“I always get upset when I hear chefs whinging and moaning that culinary colleges don't turn out chefs that they want to employ. What I say is get off your backside and go into these colleges. Like me, my dad, my uncle - inspire that next generation.

**WORK WITH THE COLLEGES AND HELP THEM.**

Come and see the students, look them in the eye, pat them on the back, pop into the college kitchens and let them work with you. That's my plea to the industry”

**Michel Roux Jr**

IN EARLY MAY, THE VINCENT ROOMS AT CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE GROUP REOPENED AFTER MAJOR REFURBISHMENT WITH A LAUNCH PARTY, WELCOMING MICHEL ROUX JR AS SPECIAL GUEST.

Tucked away in the heart of Westminster and overlooking the historic Vincent Square, The Vincent Rooms at Westminster Kingsway College is a trio of elegant eating areas in which some of the UK's best chefs and hospitality professionals have trained, including MasterChef: The Professionals winners Tom Hamblet (2024), Nikita Pathakji (2022), and Alex Webb (2020), and the 2025 Young Chef Olympiad winner Kamran Taylor.

On 6th May, Westminster Kingsway College welcomed guests to celebrate the Vincent Rooms reopening and showcase its renewed mission to train the next generation of culinary professionals and make a lasting social impact through food and hospitality.

With over 100 years of hospitality and culinary heritage, the college first opened in 1910 with the support of legendary chef Auguste Escoffier and hotelier César Ritz – two of the most influential names in the history of fine dining and hospitality. Since then, the college has remained a leader in professional training, with many graduates going on to work in top kitchens around the world. Alumni include Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott, Anthony Worrall Thompson, Andrew Wong, and Ben Murphy.

The Vincent Rooms at Westminster Kingsway College are made up of:

**Escoffier:** a fine-dining restaurant where third-year students design themed menus using the principles of legendary chef Auguste Escoffier with a modern twist.

**Brasserie**: serving fresh, seasonal dishes.

**Cafe and Bar**: the perfect place to relax with coffee, cake or a cocktail.

Every dish is cooked and served by students as part of their training and follow the criteria set by the awarding organisations such as the City & Guilds to achieve industry-standard skills with some students achieving the "Westminster Diploma', awarded by the college to those who excel during their training.

Taking to the stage, Michel Roux Jr reflected on the Roux familiies long held affection for the college;

"Le Gavroche opened in 1967. And the Roux brothers had a philosophy. The philosophy was to pass on their knowledge and to be an inspiration for the next generation. And they saw this college – Westminster Kingsway - exactly as that. A place youngsters, be it chefs or front of house, can come and learn.

"Learn their trade and come out with a qualification that means something. That was key. Le Gavroche sent all their apprentices to this college - and I carried on when I took over from my dear dad back in the 90s"

Michel Jr then reflected on his head chef, Rachel Humphrey herself an alumnus of Westminster Kingsway College;

"My head chef, Rachel Humphrey, studied here for three years. And she absolutely adored this college. She adored it from the moment she stepped in here. She'd be learning and learning and come back and explain what she'd learned. And it was with great pride for me and for my late Dad, when Rachel said she wanted to be the first female head chef of Le Gavroche.

"Just saying that just saying that gives me goosebumps. Rachel worked her socks off and she became our first female head chef of Le Gavroche. It fills me with pride, and it should fill everybody at this college with pride too.

"But Rachel is just one chef. There are so many that have studied here at Westminster Kingsway College who have done extraordinary things"

Having popped through into the kitchens at Westminster Kingsway at the beginning of the evening, Michel met with student chefs from years 2 & 3 who were assisting with preparing the evenings canapes and bowl food;

"I went into the kitchens here tonight just to say hello to the chefs, and they're all beaming. They've all got a big smile on their face.

They're all happy, they're proud - they're proud to be chefs. That's so wonderful to see and it's infectious. I spoke to one young chef who had done a three-month placement at Caractere – my daughter's restaurant. She told me how much she loved her time there; how much she learnt. And I think that's what it's all about. Passing on your knowledge, passing on all you can.

"I always get upset when I hear chefs whinging and moaning that culinary colleges don't turn out chefs that they want to employ. What I say to them is get off your backside and go into these colleges. Like me, my dad, my uncle - inspire that next generation. Work with the colleges and help them. Come and see the students, look them in the eye, pat them on the back, pop into the college kitchens and let them work with you. That's my plea to the industry'

Michel Jr then finished his speech announcing the forthcoming Le Gavroche Week, held in the Escoffier Room at Westminster Kingsway;

"Every year now, we have a Le Gavroche Week here. Some of my team come in to help the students. Chef Rachel and the twins who managed the restaurant on Brook Street. It's all encompassing. A little Gavroche restaurant here at the college. Now that is special. Now that is inspiring the students. And that is what we do. Because our industry is such a wonderful thing. It's an industry that I love, I've spent a lifetime in it, and I'm still spending a lot of time in it. But it's one that I love, it's my life"

Angela Joyce, Chief Executive of Capital City College, added: "The Vincent Rooms at our Westminster campus is a beacon of excellence within the college sector; showcasing how partnerships between industry and education can create a highly skilled workforce. The "Westminster Diploma' is the gold standard within hospitality and culinary arts, and there are many great chefs and hoteliers who are having incredible careers following their time at the College. We are so proud to have invested in the Vincent Rooms that will not only provide fine dining, casual dining and a café for the public, it will enable us to support hundreds of future chefs, hoteliers and restaurateurs."

Rose Wangen-Jones, Managing Director, Marketing, Destination & Commercial at London & Partners, commented: "Being one of London's best-kept secrets, The Vincent Rooms is where world-class talent is not only discovered but nurtured. Its reopening marks an exciting new chapter in the city's culinary offer, where guests can enjoy outstanding food while supporting the next generation of hospitality stars. Having seen this first-hand when The Vincent Rooms catered for the London Growth Plan launch, I am able to speak to their impact and quality. This is the kind of uniquely London experience that brings together heritage, creativity, and social impact, all in one dynamic setting."

Jackie Chapman, Group Principal for Apprenticeships, Partnerships and Innovation at Capital City College, said: "The alumni that they have taught span the globe and help to inspire others. This investment will enable us to support more students and expand the fabulous dining experience with the increased opening hours."

Capital City College

"Cooking is a lifelong journey of learning and discovery"
Auguste Escoffier

## "It all begins at WestKing"

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY - PART OF CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE

# THE SOMMELIER DIARIES

THE SOMMELIER DIARIES

Words Jean Smullen

# ÁLVARO PALACIOS – A SPANISH MAVERICK

SPAIN HAS A WINE CULTURE AS HISTORIC AS FRANCE OR ITALY AND OFFERS A STARTLING VARIETY OF WINE STYLES AND GRAPE VARIETIES.

Spanish wine production has a lot of points of difference though; the climate is generally excellent for viticulture, there are plenty of old vines, and a lot of indigenous grape varieties with great potential.  In Spain the Consejo Regulator the law-making regulatory body  is locally based, not centrally controlled as it is in France and Italy, so they are more in touch with what is happening on the ground. As a result, Spanish wine regions are much more open to change and experimentation than many other European countries.

Spain also has a very good track record when it comes to producing organic and biodynamic wines, it helps of course that most of their key wine regions have either an arid dry desert climate or a Mediterranean one.  90% of

organic grapes globally come from European wine regions, Italy leads with way with organic wines accounting for 15.9% of all wines produced there; Spain comes in second place with organic wines accounting for a total of 11.6% of their total production. 80% of organic wines produced in Spain are now exported.

Spanish wine history goes back at least 3,000 years, to the time when Phoenician traders founded a port on the south-western coast called Gadir (now Cádiz), they then moved inland to establish a city called Xera (now Jerez), and planted vines in the surrounding hills. The hot climate and the tastes of the times favoured sweetish wines that would keep well, which was the origins of Spain's fortified wines. By the beginning of the Christian era Spanish wines were amongst the most heavily traded commodities throughout the Mediterranean and north Africa.

Spain's next leap forward came in the 19th century, as the vineyards of northern Europe were progressively devastated by Phylloxera, French wine producers came over the Pyrenees to see what they could do to salvage their livelihood on Spanish soil, often bringing their treasured vines with them. Some of the Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot planted in Spain, dates to this time. Phylloxera eventually reached Spain, at the end of the 19th century, but by then, the solution of grafting on to American rootstock had been discovered and the vineyards were replanted as necessary with as short a break in production as possible.

However further disasters were to emerge, the Spanish civil war condemned vine growing to neglect and this was followed by World War II, which meant that no one was buying wines. By the early 1950's things were getting back to normal. Quality and quantity increased and the export market revived. Local wine protection societies began to win official recognition and the seeds of the comprehensive Spanish system of Denominación de Origende were established.

In addition, today many Spanish vineyards are growing vines which are over 40 years old, therefore producing smaller yields. A good deal of work is now going on in the vineyards with new vine varieties and new training, pruning and rooting techniques. In recent years winemakers have been quick to take new technology to their Bodegas and many of the most modern wineries in Europe are now to be found in Spain.

Catalonia is one of the most interesting of Spain's emerging wine regions, from a winemaking perspective. It has leapt from the middle-ages to the 21st century in less than 30 years. The French influence has always been strong in Catalonia and many French grape varieties were planted here in experimental partnership with native Spanish grapes. Catalonia also home to Cava the second most popular bottle-fermented sparkling wine appellation in the world.

Within Catalonia you will find Priorat DOQ, one of only two Spanish regions to carry the DOCa/DOQ quality status. Denominación de Origen Calificada, is the highest classification level awarded in Spain for quality wines, the other region to carry that status is Rioja.

Classic Drinks
ELY
TASTING BOOKLET

Álvaro Palacios was the man who put the Priorat DOQ on the global wine map. Álvaro, whose family owns the prestigious Rioja Bodega, Palacios Remondo, spent two years at Château Pétrus, followed by a stint in the Napa Valley in California, before setting up on his own in Priorat. From the outset, he set out to produce world-class wines using fruit from extremely low-yielding old vines and applying ultra-modern winemaking techniques. Born into a wine family in Rioja Oriental, he left the family business to subsequently followed his own path; by moving his wine making operation to the relatively unknown regions of Priorat in Catalonia in 1989 and to Bierzo in Northern Spain in 1999 where he established a winery with his nephew Ricardo Perez.

Álvaro Palacios then made his name on the world wine stage for his world-famous wines, **L'Ermita** a wine from Priorat and his **Descendientes de J Palacios**, single-vineyard wines produced in Corullón in Bierzo, on an estate named in honour of Alvaro's father who passed away in 2000.

The Bierzo DOP Denominación de Origen Protegida lies to the east of Rías Biaxas near the border between Galicia and Castilla y León and has a significantly warmer climate that other regions in "Green Spain" a humid region that gets 1,300 meters of rain a year. Most of Bierzo's vineyards are planted at a high altitude of 600 meters (1,900 feet) mostly alongside the river Sil.

The history of wine making in Bierzo was traditional for most of the 20th century. The regions producers mostly family owned, sold into local co-operatives and wine made a significant contribution to the household economy. Most of the wine was sold on the home market and the region did not have a lot of recognition. In 1999, the arrival of Álvaro Palacios to the area, made a huge difference. New modern wineries followed, opening an international market for Bierzo wines.

Álvaro Palacios is a larger-than-life character, a consummate showman, he is a past-master at selling his wine. With a twinkle in his eye, he refers to "drunken monks" reflecting the heritage of the monastic settlements, where the wineries evolved in Priorat in the Middle Ages. However, that is where the history lesson ends. Everything about his approach to wine making is ultra-modern and rooted in the French way of doing things. As he said himself, his objective was to make a Spanish Pétrus.

The other key factor is that the grape Álvaro Palacios chose to focus his talent on was Grenache, or if you want to use its Catalan name Garnatxa, or Garnacha as we more commonly know it. The Garnatxa grape originates in Spain though it is one of the most widely planted and used red grapes in terms of production in most of Mediterranean Spain and France (where it is known as Grenache Noir). Aromas of black cherry with peppery notes are a characteristic and it can either be soft and fruity, or powerful and meaty, in the hands of Palacios, it is a rock star!

The second grape Álvaro Palacios chose to make great, was Mencía, a varietal indigenous to northern Spain. I was first introduced to the Mencía grape by the late John Radford in Bierzo in 2007 and was instantly sold. Mencía has

developed a cult following because it makes a lighter style of red wine, which is much more in demand these days with red wine drinkers. It was originally from Portugal where it is known as Jaen. It produces wines that are light, pale and relatively fragrant. Since the 1990s, the grape has increased enormously in popularity, so an increasing number of noted Spanish winemakers are now working with it.

Mencía only grows on the Iberian Peninsula. What makes Mencía so special is the potential to age as a fine wine and the rich aromas and lighter structure of the wine style. If your customer loves Pinot Noir, then wines made from Mencía will hold great appeal.

The wines tasted with Álvaro Palacios included: **2020 Remondo Propiedad DOCa Rioja**; **2018 Finca Dofí DOQ Priorat**; **2018 La Baixada DOQ Priorat**; **2017 Les Aubaguettes DOQ Priorat**; **2016 Villa De Corullón DOP Bierzo** and finally **2020 Las Lamas Corullón DOP Bierzo**. I have chosen four to review.

PROPIEDAD
Dofí
LA BAIXADA
LES AUBAGUETES
Villa de Corullón

**2018 Finca Dofí DOQ Priorat** this is made from a blend of 88% Garnacha, 9% Cariñena, 2% Pinapol and 1% other white varietals. The Garnacha vines are 90 years old, so this is an incredibly concentrated wine. It has high levels of acidity and lots of complex minerality showing when tasted. Dark concentrated black fruit aromas with lots of mocha aromas. The trellised vineyards where the fruit for this wine is grown are planted at high altitude. There was a wonderful delicacy on the palate with lots of floral notes, almost like peony rose. They produce 30,000 bottles of this every year and this was still very young and needs lots more time. Dofí at 12 ha is the largest of his single vineyards in the region. It was first planted in 1996, 30 years ago in the village of Gratallops with a Garnacha clone that produces smaller berries. The grapes are picked quite late and this wine is aged in a mix of foudre and concrete vats.

**2017 Álvaro Palacios Les Aubaguetes DOQ Priorat**, was outstanding made from a blend of 71% Garnacha, 28% Cariñena and 1% Garnacha Blanca and Macabeo, grown on a north-facing vineyard in Bellmunt del Priorat planted with vines, some of which are over 100-year-old. This is a single-vineyard and classified as a Grand Vinya Classificada. Les Aubaguetes produces approximately 1,200 bottles annually. This wine is impacted by the cooling breeze coming off the Mediterranean. It is aromatic, with mineral notes and powerful rich dark fruit with hints of lavender and pink peppercorn. Beautifully structured, and again very young, this is a very fine expression of the region's wine style.

**2016 Villa De Corullón DOP Bierzo** made from a blend of 95% Mencía, 4% White Varieties and 1% Alicante Bouchet. Made from grapes grown on three sites, this was Burgundian in style (and bottled in a Burgundian bottle). Made from grapes grown on a 45ha plot where the vines vary in age from 70-120 years old. This was fermented in wooden vats and aged in a mix of barrels and foudre. This was outstanding it was very perfumed on the nose, floral notes and elegant and in style reminiscent of Cabernet Franc. The minerality, red fruit and a hint of smoke held much appeal.

**2020 Las Lamas Corullón DOP Bierzo** Another Burgundian style wine made from 92% Mencía, 6% white native varietals and 2% Alicante Bouchet grown on a single vineyard "Grand Cru" site. This intense fruit forward red has lots of red fruit and a hint of smokiness on the nose, on the palate, there is soft tannin, more smoke, but a floral character and lots of acidity. This is a very fresh style, with a lovely mineral note. Still incredibly young, but incredibly elegant.

*The wines of Álvaro Palacios are all in the upper fine wine price category, but for the serious wine enthusiast, they hold great appeal.*
*The wines are available in the UK from Berry Bros & Rudd*
*The wines are distributed in the Republic of Ireland by Classic Drinks*

# One recipe, endless creativity

Do you ever repeat the same component recipe in different dishes? Of course you do. It’s practical. But what if you could easily create slight variations for different dishes, styles or seasons — without starting from scratch?

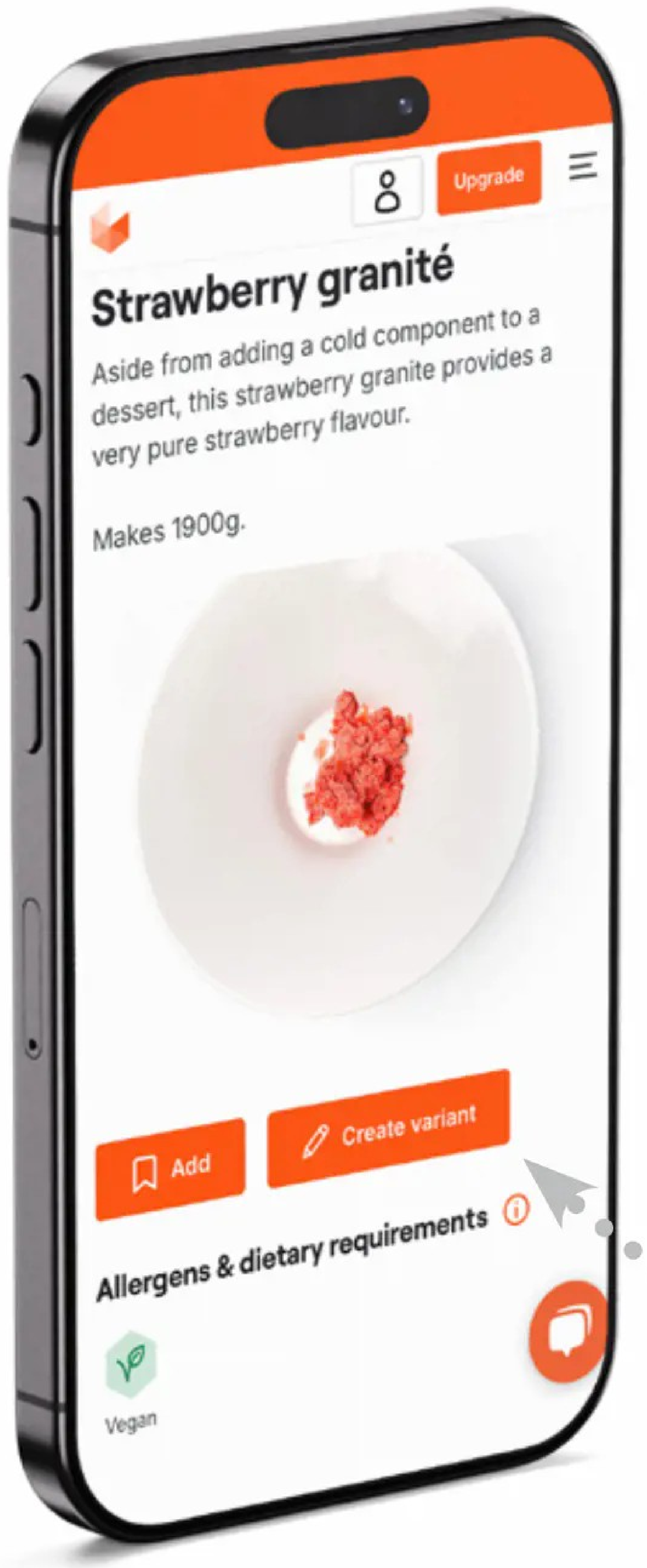
Let’s take granité. A great addition to any dessert in terms of flavour, temperature and texture. With only a few tweaks, it becomes something entirely new.

As a chef you don’t reinvent everything, you evolve ideas. And that’s exactly why Gastronomixs is here to help: a modular way of thinking where every component is a creative startingpoint.

**Gastronomixs**
Empowering chefs to create

## Go the modular route

In professional kitchens, you work with component recipes. Think of a dressing, sous vide pork loin or pommes dauphine. Gastronomixs provides recipes in exactly that way. The beauty of the way Escoffier founded this strict and organised way of working, lends itself for the quick creation of new dishes. **Mixing and matching recipes to meet the demand of guests.** A modular system for creativity so to say, you could compare it to playing with LEGO® as a child. It gives you the freedom to create a whole new world of original, eye-catching dishes. A component will never define your style and signature, the combination of components in a dish will!



Strawberry granité

Aside from adding a cold component to a dessert, this strawberry granite provides a very pure strawberry flavour.

Makes 1900g.

## A simple tweak turns something classic into something new. That’s real creativity.

As a chef, you’ll often adapt component recipes to suit their mise en place or customer preferences. Until recently, this meant scribbling adjustments on printed recipes. With Gastronomixs, you can digitally create and save your own variations within the platform.

## Creating with building blocks

The Gastronomixs team continuously creates new components. There are new recipes added to the platform every week. All those tried-and-tested recipes **save you thousands of hours (!)** of testing and food waste. And it’s not only recipes, the platform also gets more and more attractive because of **newly added tech features**.

# Rosé champagne granité

A simple recipe for a granité that has just the texture to easily scrape into a granité.

Makes 1100g.

- 200g sugar
- 300g water
- 600g rosé champagne
- 1 lemon, juiced

- Bring the sugar and water to the boil until the sugar dissolves.
- Cool back the sugar water.
- Then mix with the rosé champagne and lemon juice and place in the freezer to completely.

**To create the strawberry variant:**
Swap the rosé champagne for 500 g strawberry coulis and increase the water to 370g.

Rosella
cascara granité

Carrot top granité

Sake and
yuzukosho granité

## The possibilities are endless

From mango kombucha to yuzu, apricot or even lettuce. Gastronomixs offers **more than 25** different granité recipes. Use them as they are, or create your own variants to suit your style and menu.

Mango
kombucha granité

Watermelon
zobo granité

Barbecued tenderstem broccoli
Gastronomixs
Product Knowledge
Dishes

## More about Gastronomixs

Gastronomixs.com is an award-winning culinary platform, which offers thousands of components for everyday ingredients. From a nectarine broth to a chocolate bergamot espuma or kimchi reduction.
**Gastronomixs proud to work with the leaders of our industry:** many renowned chefs like Luke French, Ben Murphy, Gareth Ward**, Adam Handling*, Ayo Adeyemi and Tom Booton are sharing various signature recipes on the platform. All recipes on Gastronomixs are building blocks for an endless supply of dishes. The platform is very user-friendly and organised in such a way that you will quickly find whatever you need. **Currently, over 43,000 chefs are already benefitting from this online tool.**

# Hey chef,

ready to uncover your
full creative potential?

**Gastronomixs**
Empowering chefs to create

# RECIPES

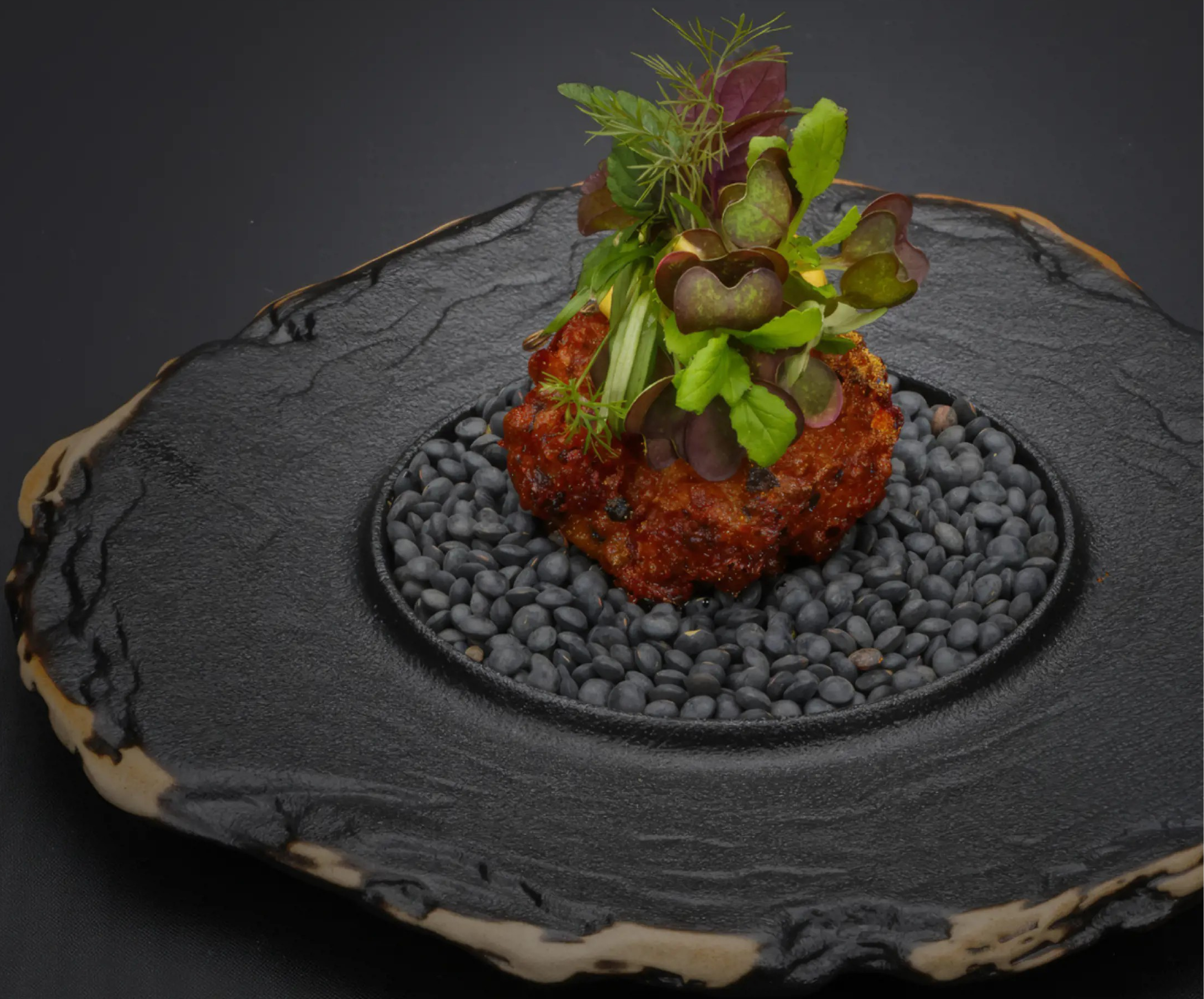
CRESS BEIGNET
BY ERIC MIETE

AVOCADO AND FISH SALAD
WITH TAHOON TOPS
BY FRANCK PONTAIS

KOPPERT ALGAE POWDER
BREAD
BY MARK FLETCHER

# CRESS BEIGNET

## By Eric Miete



KOPPERT CRESS
*Architecture Aromatique*

**20x recipe for 1000 beignets:**

## INGREDIENTS

- 800g cooked potato
- 180g flour
- 14g baking powder
- 10g maldon salt
- 300g Vegetables blanched brunoise
- 30g finely chopped cashews
- 30g finely chopped almonds
- 2 trays Rock Chives finely chopped
- 5 Shiso Leaves Purple finely chopped
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 250ml spa red
- 1 can Algae Powder Gold
- Shiso Bicolor
- Bicolor Mustard Cress
- Olympia Cress

## NECESSITIES

- Kitchenaid
- Cooking pot
- Thin peeler
- Sieve
- Fry
- Ice crusher for 25 grams
- Baking tray with paper
- Basin

## METHOD

Boil 1kg. of potato and steam it dry
Rub the potato through a sieve and put into a kitchenaid basin.
Mix this with the remaining ingredients and let rest for 10 minutes.
Preheat the deep fryer to 160 degrees.
Take a small ice cream scoop of 25 grams and fry the batter until golden brown.
When the oil ball is nicely golden brown, let it cool on paper towels
Roll the oil balls through the Algae Powder Gold and finish with Shiso Bicolor, Bicolor Mustard Cress and Olympia Cress.
For best results, chill for 1 hour before use.

# AVOCADO AND FISH SALAD WITH TAHOON TOPS

## By Franck Pontais

KOPPERT CRESS
*Architecture Aromatique*

For 4 portions

**INGREDIENTS**

- 16 pieces Tahoon Tops
- 3 ripe avocados
- 2 pieces buttum mushrooms
- 160g diced cooked prawns
- 160g diced fresh salmon
- Lemon juice from one lemon
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 pinches pink peppercorn

**METHOD**

Cut two avocado into two to make two halves.

Peel and dice the remaining avocado and mix with the diced salmon and diced prawn.

Make the dressing with the pink peppercorn, olive oil and lemon juice.

Mix it with the mixture of avocado, salmon and prawn to make the salad.

Take the empty avocado half and fill it with the salad.

Thinly slice the mushrooms and layer them aside of the filled avocado.

Serve with four pieces of Tahoon Tops, and enjoy!

# KOPPERT ALGAE POWDER BREAD

## By Mark Fletcher

KOPPERT CRESS
*Architecture Aromatique*

**Makes 2 x Terrine Mould**

## INGREDIENTS

- 26g fresh yeast
- 1kilo wtrong bread flour
- 15g seat salt
- 700g warm water
- 6tsp  Algae Powder gold

## METHOD

Mix the flour and Algae Powder.
Dissolve the yeast in the warm water.
Add the salt to the flour and Algae Powder.
Put the flour mixture in the bowl of the stand mixer.
Put the stand mixer down and turn on.
Slowly add the yeast with water to the bowl while the stand mixer mixes.
Mix for 5 minutes.
Place the dough on a lightly floured surface.
Knead the dough to form a ball.
Cut the dough into two and rest for 2 mins.
Spray the terrine moulds with release spray.
Roll each dough piece into a log shape.
Place each one into the terrine moulds.
Cover with greased cling film .
Proove until the dough rises above the rim.
Set the oven to combi mode with 5% steam – set the temperature to 175°c.
Once proved place the mould in the oven and bake for 20-25mins.
The bread should feel light, and the base have a hollow sound when cooked .
Cool.
Slice as required.

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